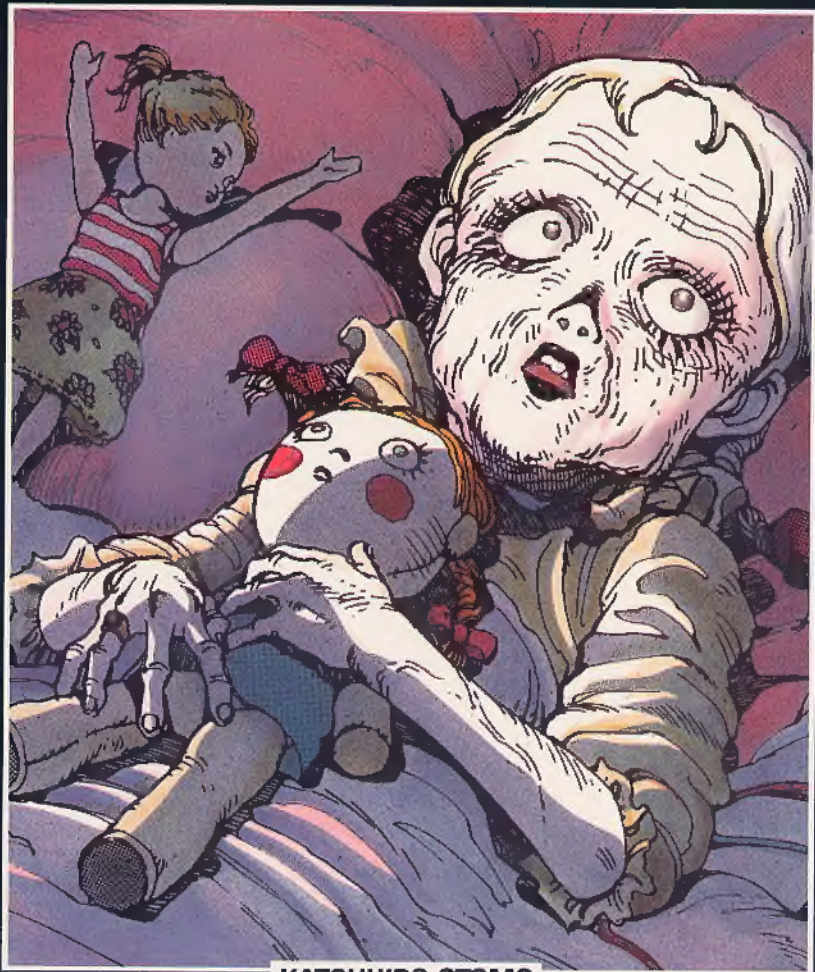


AKIRA 7

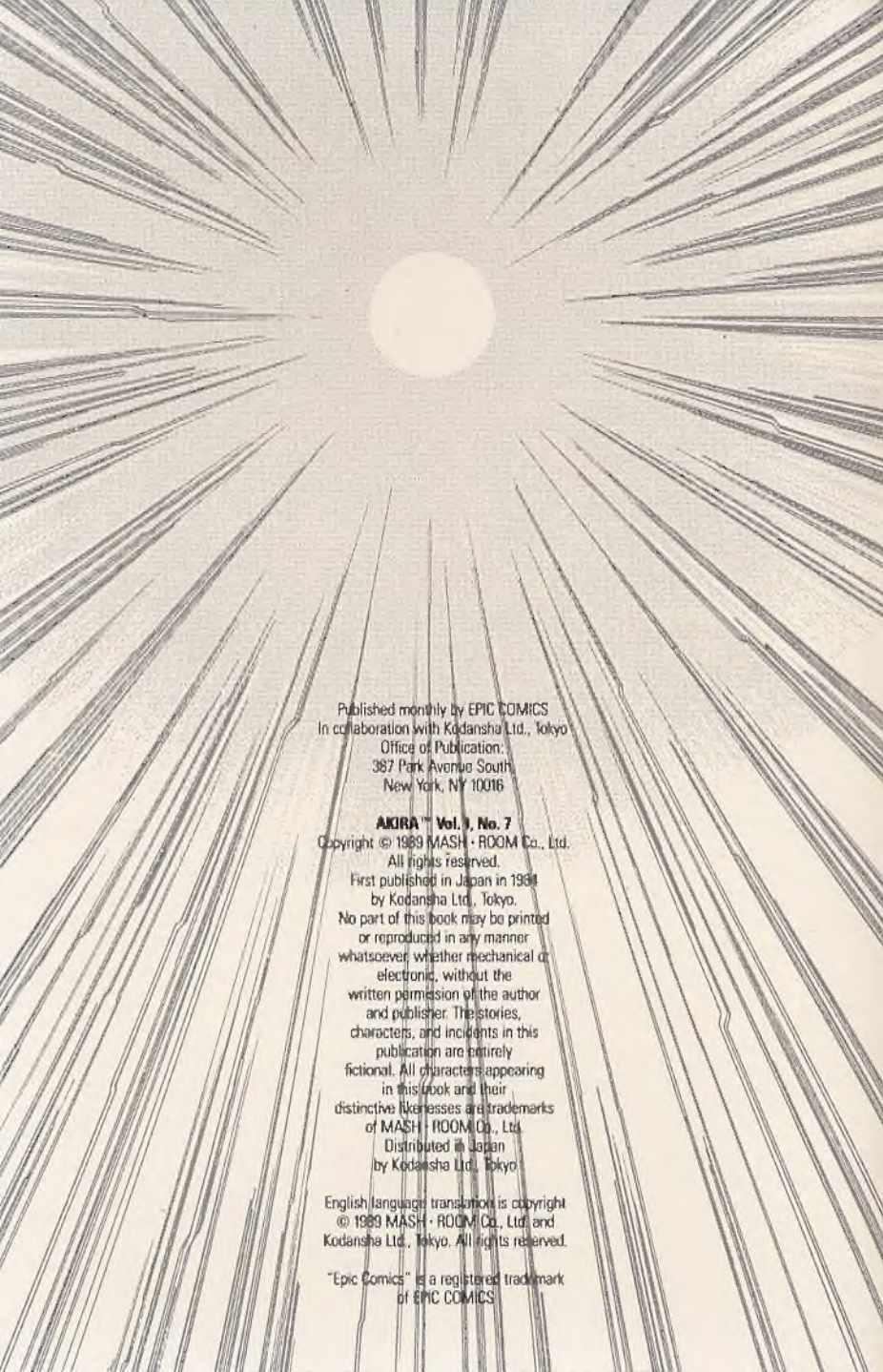
TM



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KATSUHIRO OTOMO



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WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE



The year is 2030. The world is rebuilding from World War III. In **Neo-Tokyo**, plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell.

Kaneda and his friends, teenage delinquents, make an unauthorized motorcycle run into the old city to check out the old site. They encounter a terrified child, known only as **Number 26**, possessing extraordinary telekinetic abilities. During the encounter, the paranormal boy gravely injures **Tetsuo**, one of

Kaneda's close friends. Then, he vanishes.

The next night, at **Harukiya**, a tough local dive, **Kaneda** attempts, unsuccessfully, to pick up a newcomer, **Kay**. In fact, she and her companion, **Ryu**, are part of an underground resistance group dedicated to learning what is happening in the old city and putting a stop to it.

Trouble ensues, and both delinquents and resistance fighters again encounter **Number 26**. **Ryu** attempts to reassure the paranormal boy, but **Kaneda** is anxious to punish him for injuring **Tetsuo**. As they argue, the mysterious soldiers pursuing **Number 26** reach the scene, and a firefight results.

Then the ominous **Colonel** in charge of the covert operation appears with a secret weapon—**Number 27**, a crippled paranormal child named **Masaru**. **Masaru** astonishes the resistance fighters by addressing **Number 26** as **Takashi**. **Kay** and **Ryu** had previously assumed that **Number 26** was the Colonel's ultimate weapon—the as-yet unseen paranormal giant code-named **Akira**.

Kaneda provokes a crisis by pretending to threaten **Takashi**, who is exhibiting symptoms of drug withdrawal. **Takashi** responds with telekinetic upheavals. **Kaneda** is again separated from the resistance fighters, but he manages to intercept and hide a pill meant for **Takashi**, who is recaptured by the Colonel's men.

The next day, **Tetsuo**—who following his accident was taken to a hospital by soldiers—reappears in school, seemingly

all right. However, during Tetsuo's treatment, the **Colonel** has learned that the delinquent has great psychic potential.

Kaneda has a girlfriend in the school infirmary analyze the drug intended for **Takashi**. It is similar in substance to pills **Kaneda** and his friends take, but unbelievably concentrated and powerful.

Determined not to let a new human weapon escape him, the **Colonel** goes to the school and collects **Tetsuo**. Under the treatments of the Colonel's chief medical officer, **Tetsuo** exhibits powerful psychic abilities...and undergoes great pain.

Meanwhile, **Kaneda**, trying to spy on the **Colonel** and learn what is happening to **Tetsuo**, re-encounters the members of the resistance, and is brought back to their headquarters. Questioned by **Ryu**, he denies all knowledge of the stolen drug.

Kiyoko, another of the psychic children under the Colonel's control, announces to her master the disastrous news that **Akira**—who is asleep, and expected to remain so for some time—will awaken in the near future. Meanwhile, at the resistance hideout, **Kaneda** encounters a ghost-like apparition of himself, shouting Akira's name.

When soldiers enter the resistance hideout in force, **Kaneda** and **Kay** manage together to escape to **Harukiya**, where the bartender agrees to shelter them.

Overwhelmed by pain, **Tetsuo** breaks out of the Colonel's installation, using his burgeoning powers to slaughter all who op-

pose him. **Tetsuo** takes control of the **Clowns**—a vicious motorcycle gang who are rivals to **Kaneda** and his friends—letting them live in return for the massive amounts of drugs required to stave off his agony.

Ryu meets with **Nezu**, a resistance leader, and they share new evidence on the scale of the **Akira** project.

A spy from the Colonel's organization learns of the **Harukiya** hideout, but he is caught and left for dead by a resistance fighter.

Yamagata and **Kaneda**'s other friends come to **Harukiya**. **Kaneda** is amazed at the stories they tell, of Tetsuo's new powers and of his bloodthirstiness. He and **Yamagata** lead all of the local street gangs on a massive, all-out attack to stop **Tetsuo** and the **Clowns**. Shortly after they leave, the Colonel, alerted by his informant, arrives at **Harukiya** and forces the bartender to tell him where the fugitives have gone.

Yamagata and his team corner **Tetsuo** in a warehouse. Most of the gang dies, and **Yamagata** tries to shoot **Tetsuo**. **Kaneda** reaches the scene in time to see **Tetsuo** brutally kill **Yamagata**. Enraged, **Kaneda** does shoot **Tetsuo**...who survives the deadly wound. As they fight, **Tetsuo** grabs the drug **Kaneda** had hidden.

When the **Colonel** arrives, **Tetsuo** swallows the drug, apparently dying of an overdose. A few minutes later, the terrible delinquent recovers, more powerful than ever, and the elated **Colonel** rechristens him **Number 41**.

AKIRA



BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

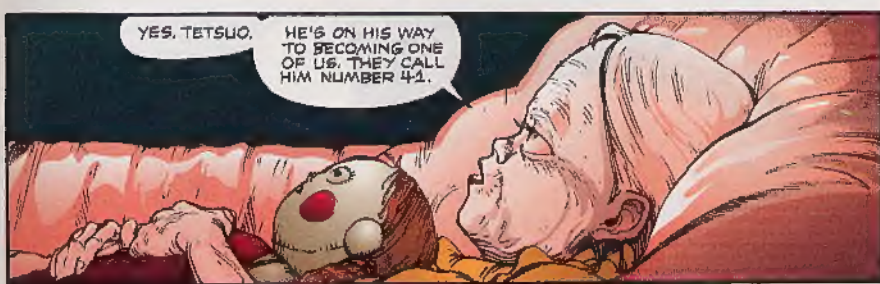
CHAPTER 7

PRISONERS AND PLAYERS





TE...
TSU...
O...?!



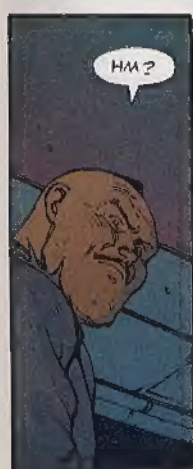
YES, TETSUO.

HE'S ON HIS WAY
TO BECOMING ONE
OF US. THEY CALL
HIM NUMBER 41.

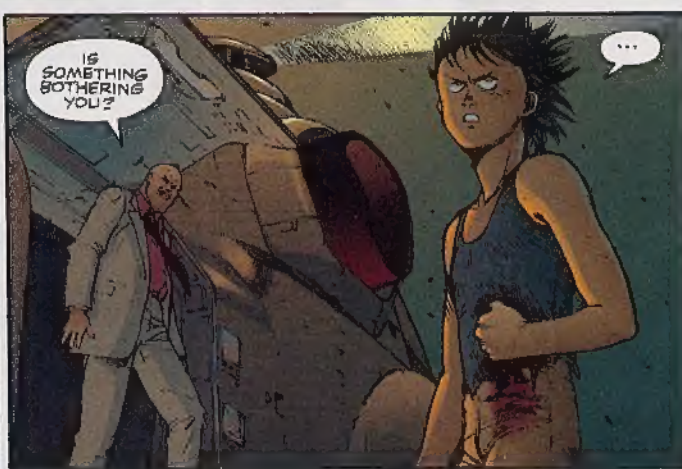


IS HE...

...VERY
POWERFUL?

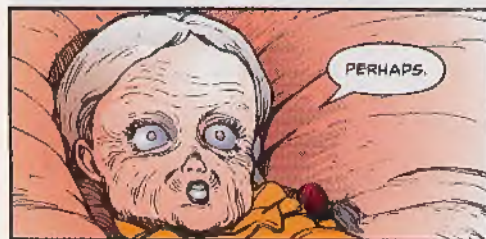
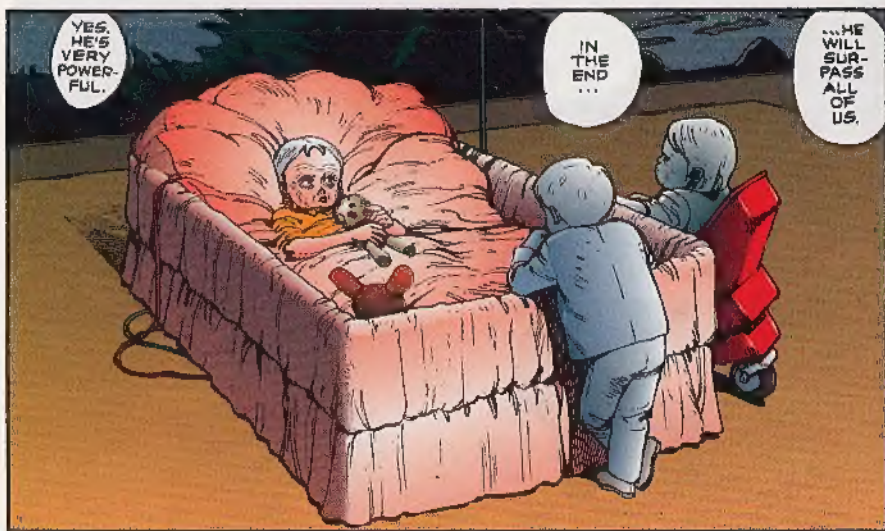


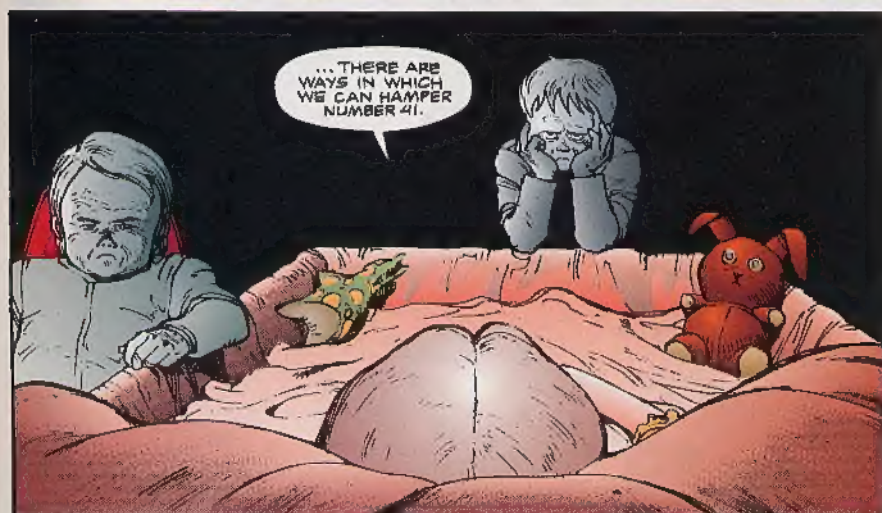
HM?



IS
SOMETHING
BOTHERING
YOU?

...

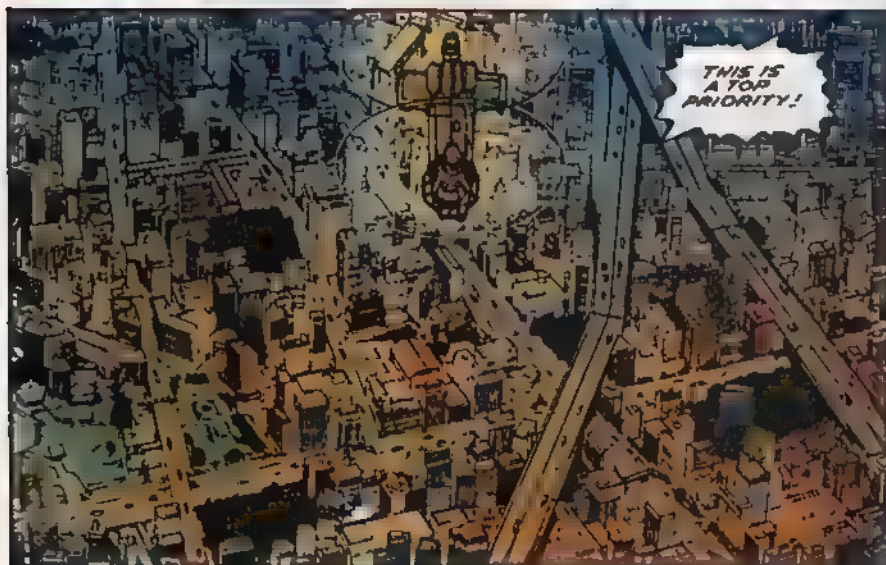


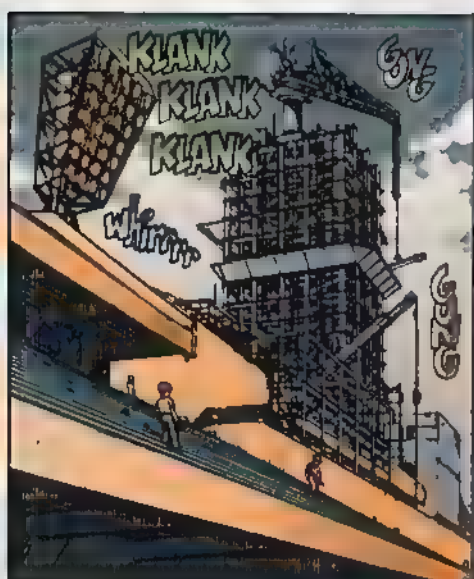
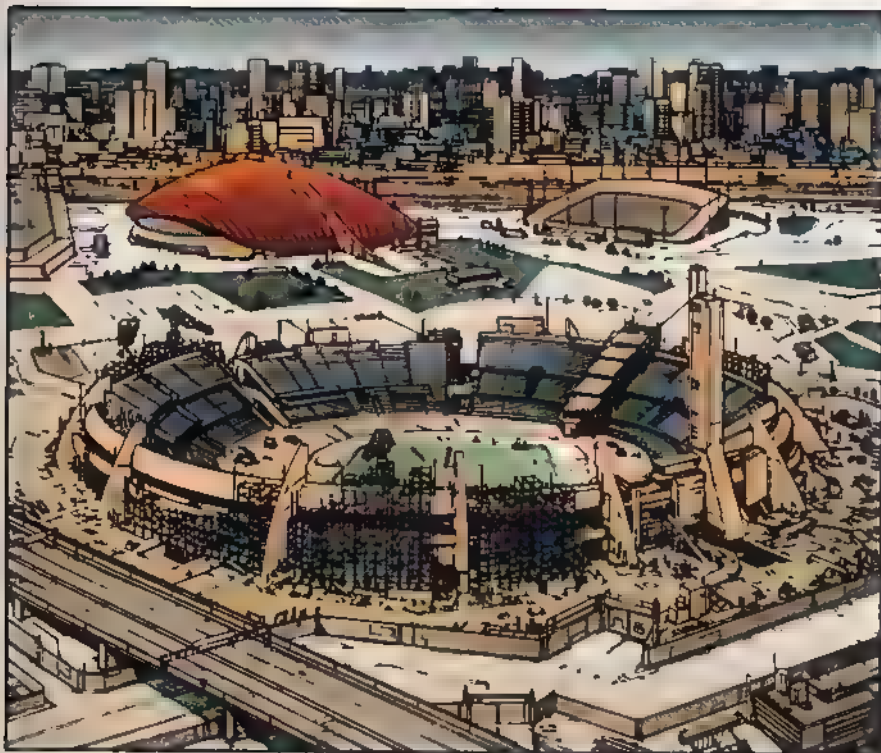


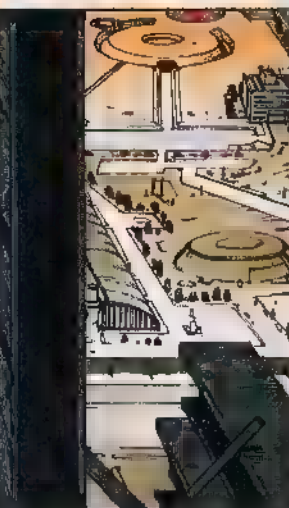
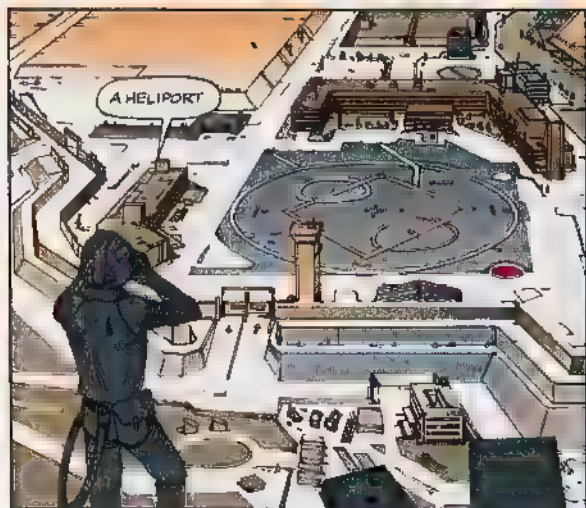
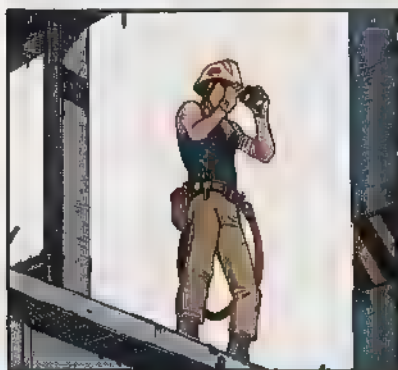


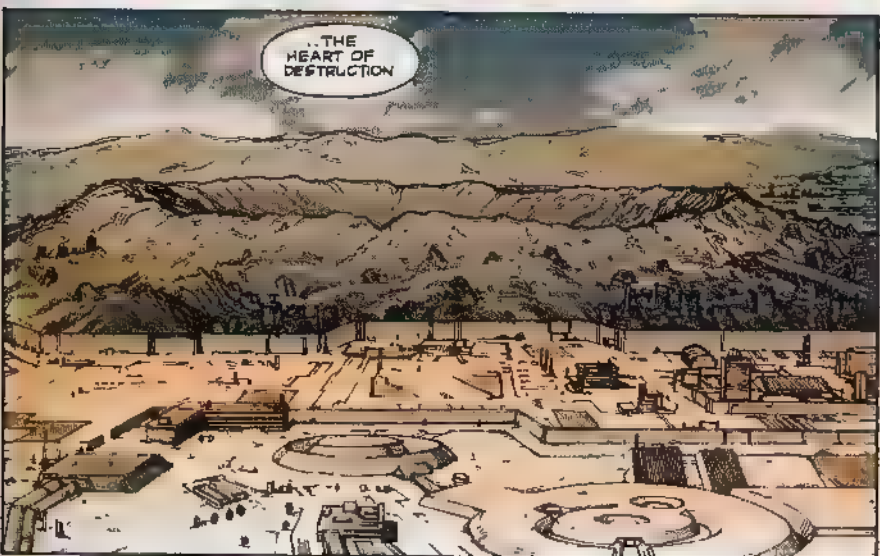
THIS IS
STF-21,
EN
ROUTE
TO
LAB
24.

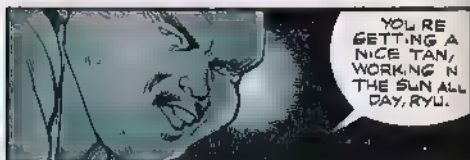
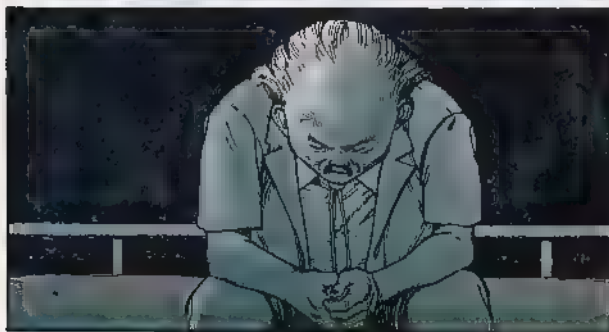
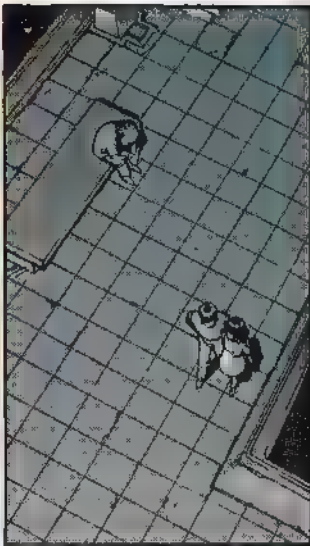
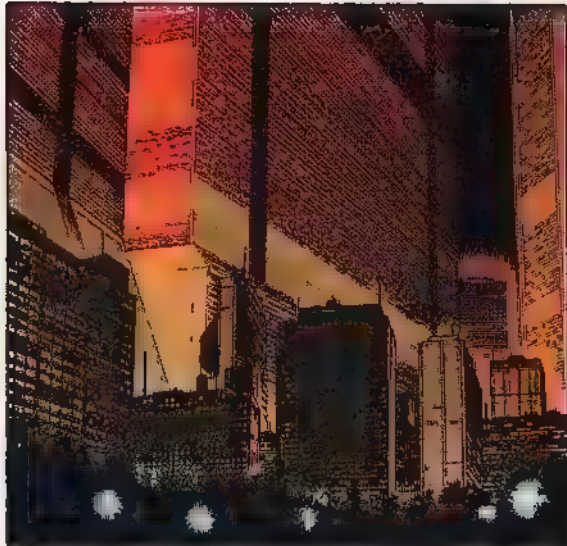
WE ARE
BRINGING
IN A
CASUALTY.
HAVE
AN
AMBULANCE
WAITING
WHEN
WE
LAND.

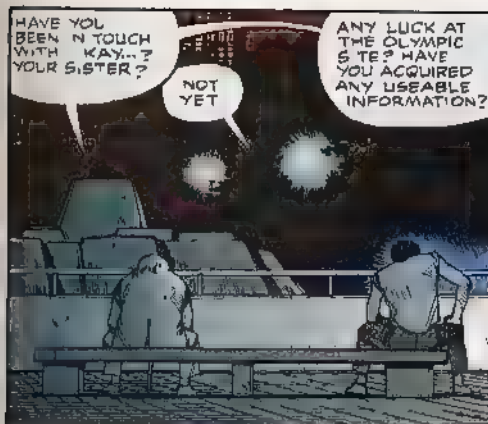












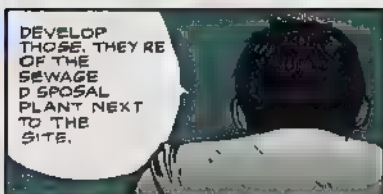
HAVE YOU
BEEN IN TOUCH
WITH KAY...?
YOUR SISTER?

NOT
YET

ANY LUCK AT
THE OLYMPIC
SITE? HAVE
YOU ACQUIRED
ANY USEABLE
INFORMATION?



Klink



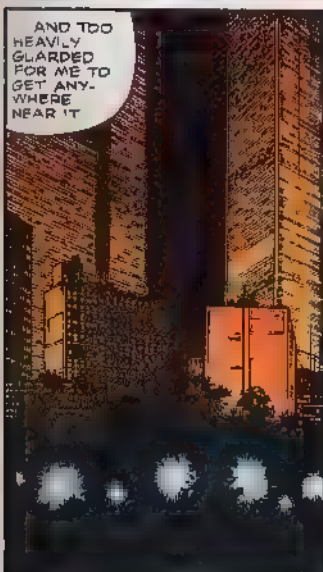
DEVELOP
THOSE. THEY'RE
OF THE
SEWAGE
DISPOSAL
PLANT NEXT
TO THE
SITE.



I FAIL TO
SEE
WHAT--

INTERESTING
PLACE

DUE SOUTH OF THE
SITE, AND CRAWLING
WITH SOLDIERS OFF
LIMITS TO CONSTRUCTION
WORKERS...



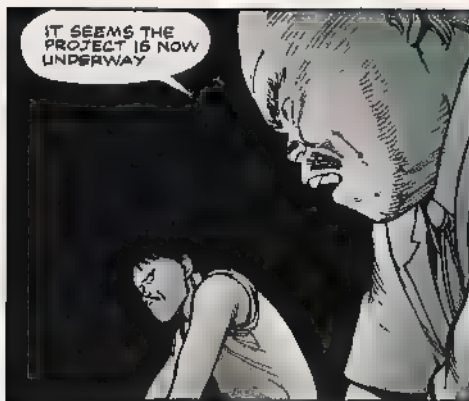
AND TOO
HEAVILY
GUARDED
FOR ME TO
GET ANY-
WHERE
NEAR IT



ANYTHING
YOU
CAN
LEARN
IS
IMPORTANT.



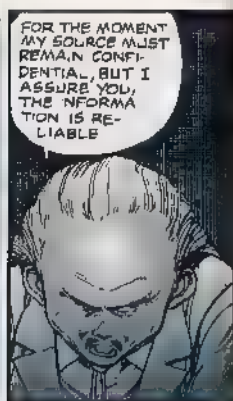
THE ARMY HAS
JUST ACQUIRED
MORE LAND, AND
THEY ARE CALLING
FOR MANEUVERS
ON A MASSIVE
SCALE.



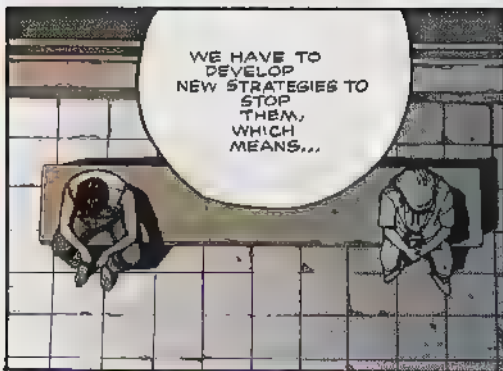
IT SEEMS THE PROJECT IS NOW UNDERWAY



WHERE?



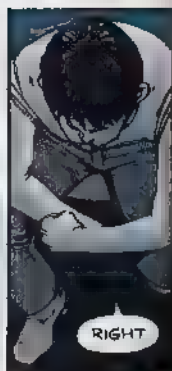
FOR THE MOMENT MY SOURCE MUST REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL, BUT I ASSURE YOU, THE INFORMATION IS RELIABLE



WE HAVE TO DEVELOP NEW STRATEGIES TO STOP THEM, WHICH MEANS...



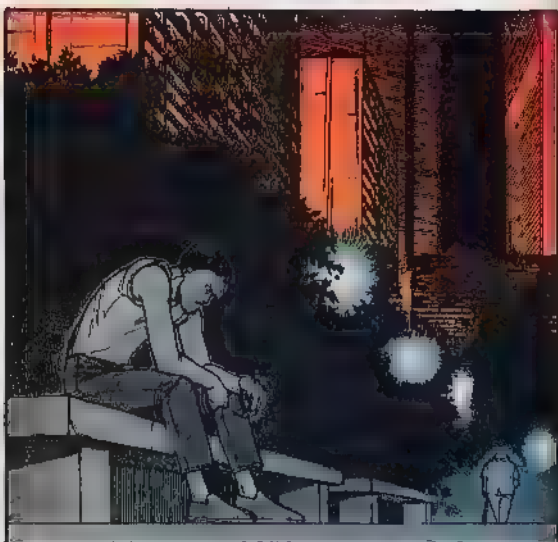
I'LL NEED A DETAILED REPORT ON EVERYTHING YOU'VE OBSERVED SO FAR..

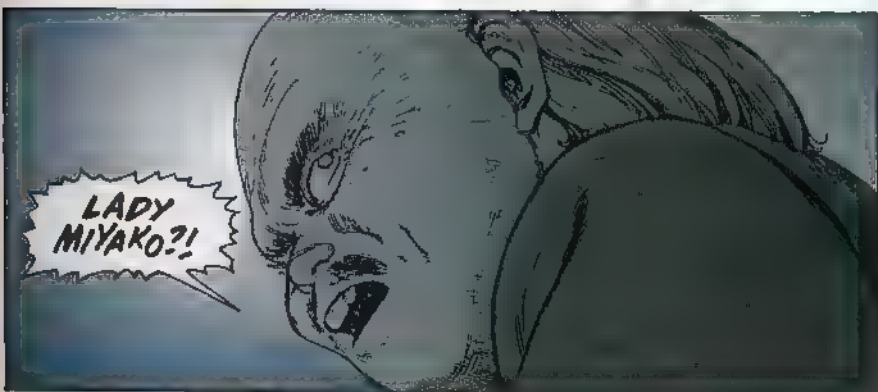
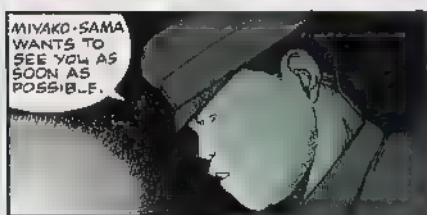
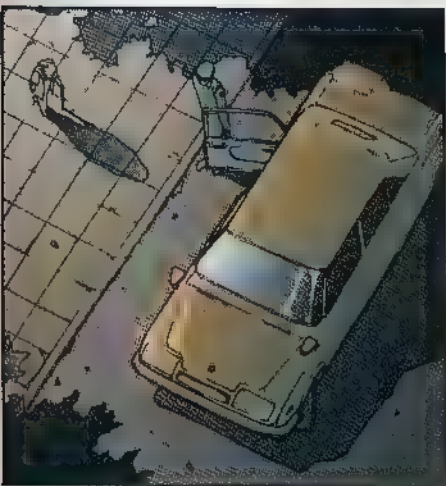
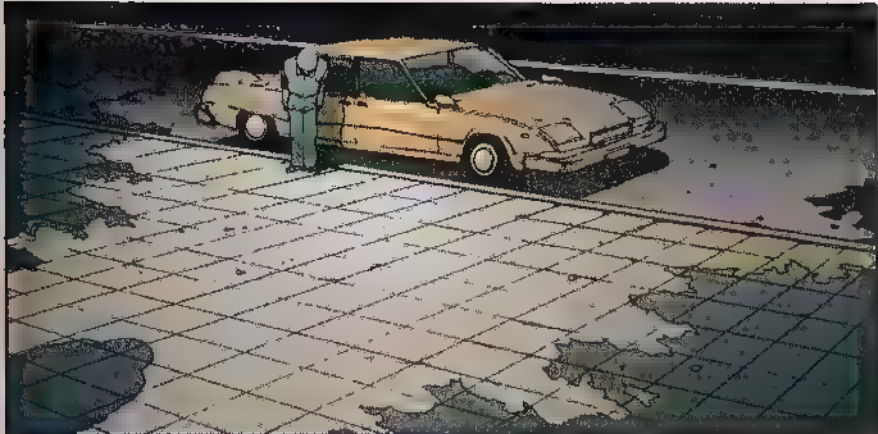


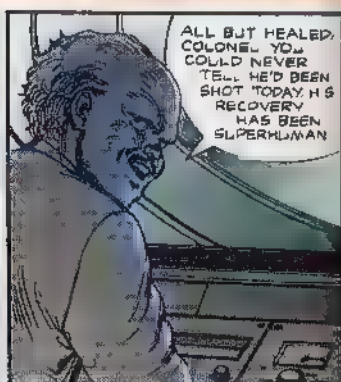
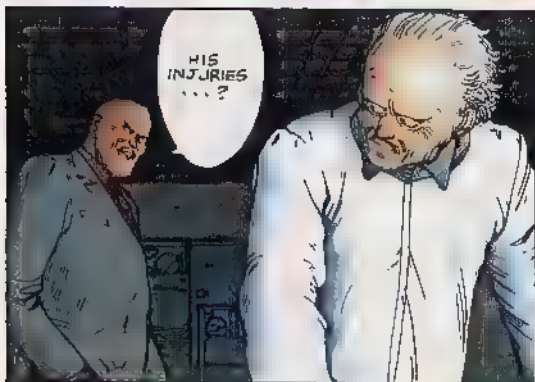
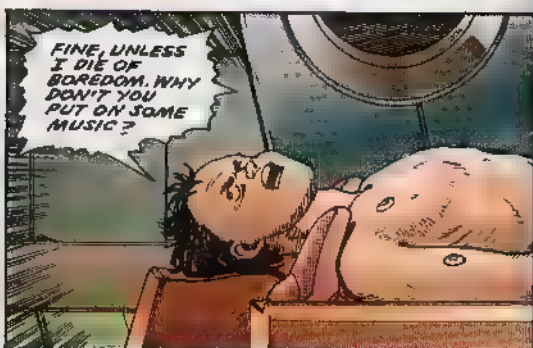
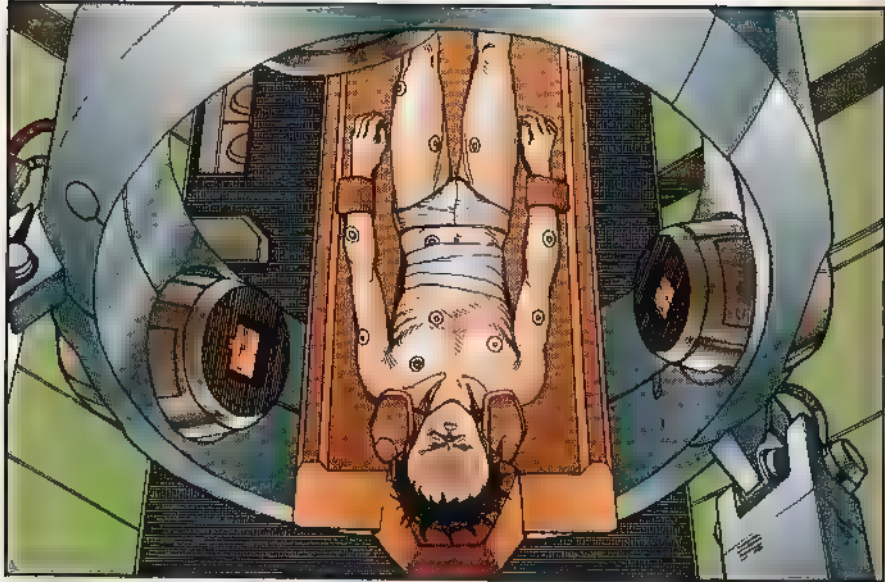
RIGHT

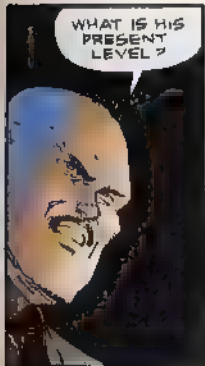


GET ON IT AT ONCE!

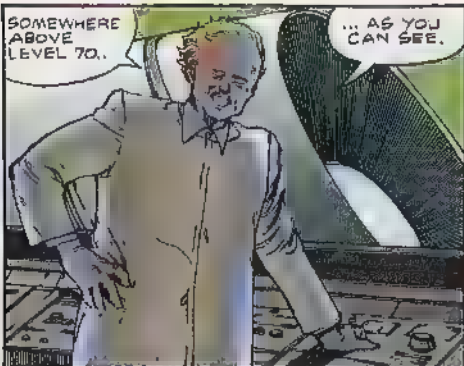






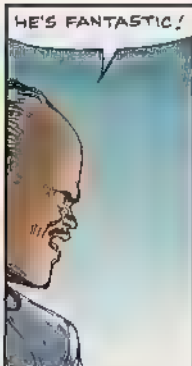


WHAT IS HIS
PRESENT
LEVEL?



SOMEWHERE
ABOVE
LEVEL 70..

... AS YOU
CAN SEE.



HE'S FANTASTIC!



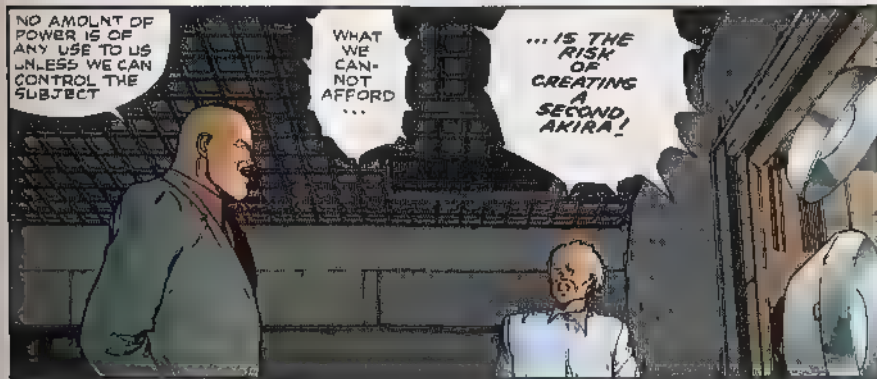
I'VE NEVER
WORKED
WITH SUCH A
SUBJECT



WHAT ABOUT
HIS ATTITUDE,
DOCTOR?



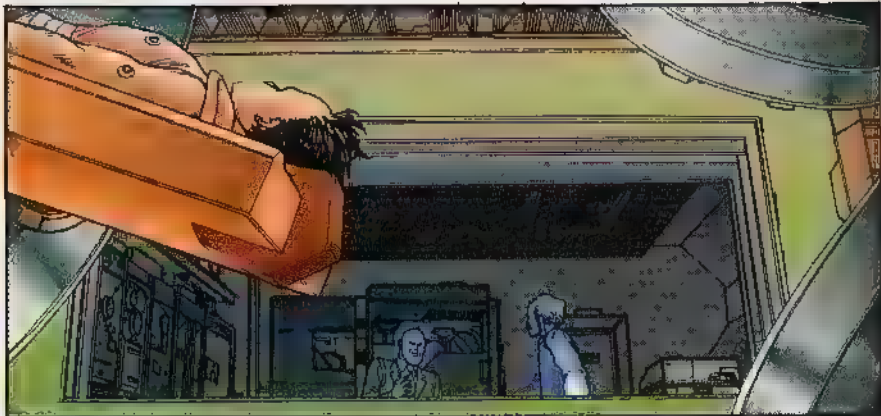
ATTITUDE?

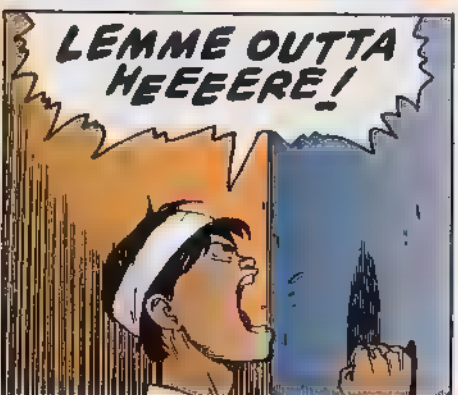
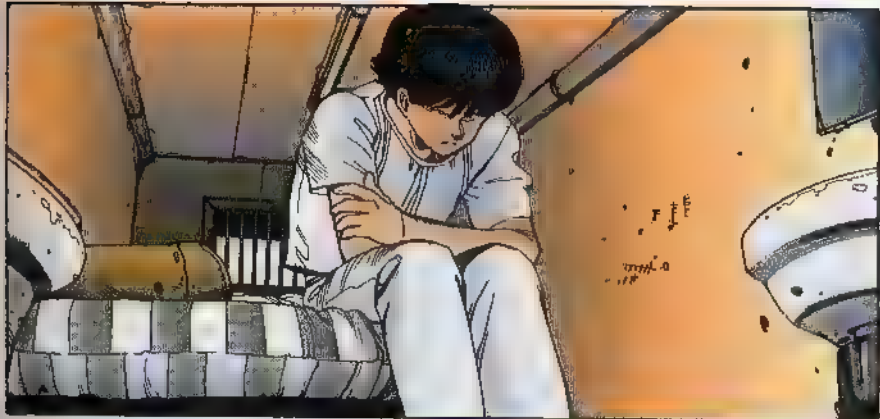


NO AMOUNT OF
POWER IS OF
ANY USE TO US
UNLESS WE CAN
CONTROL THE
SUBJECT

WHAT
WE
CAN-
NOT
AFFORD
...

... IS THE
RISK
OF
CREATING
A
SECOND
AKIRA!





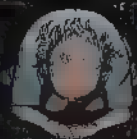
ANYBODY
HERE?!

GOOD
EVENING,
MR.
NEZU.

SHE'S
BEEN
WAITING
FOR
YOU
FOR
SOME
TIME.

WHY
DOES
SHE
WANT
TO
SEE
ME
AT
THIS
HOUR?
IS
ANY-
THING
WRONG
?


YOU'RE
LATE.



PLEASE
ACCEPT MY
APOLOGES,
LADY MIYAKO.
WHY DID YOU
SUMMON
ME?



AH...
NEZU...
LITTLE
RODENT...



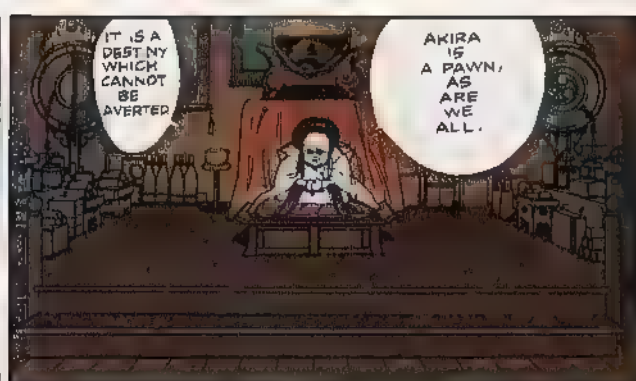
I
WANTED
TO TELL
YOU OF
WHAT
I
HAVE
DREAMED.

CHIT



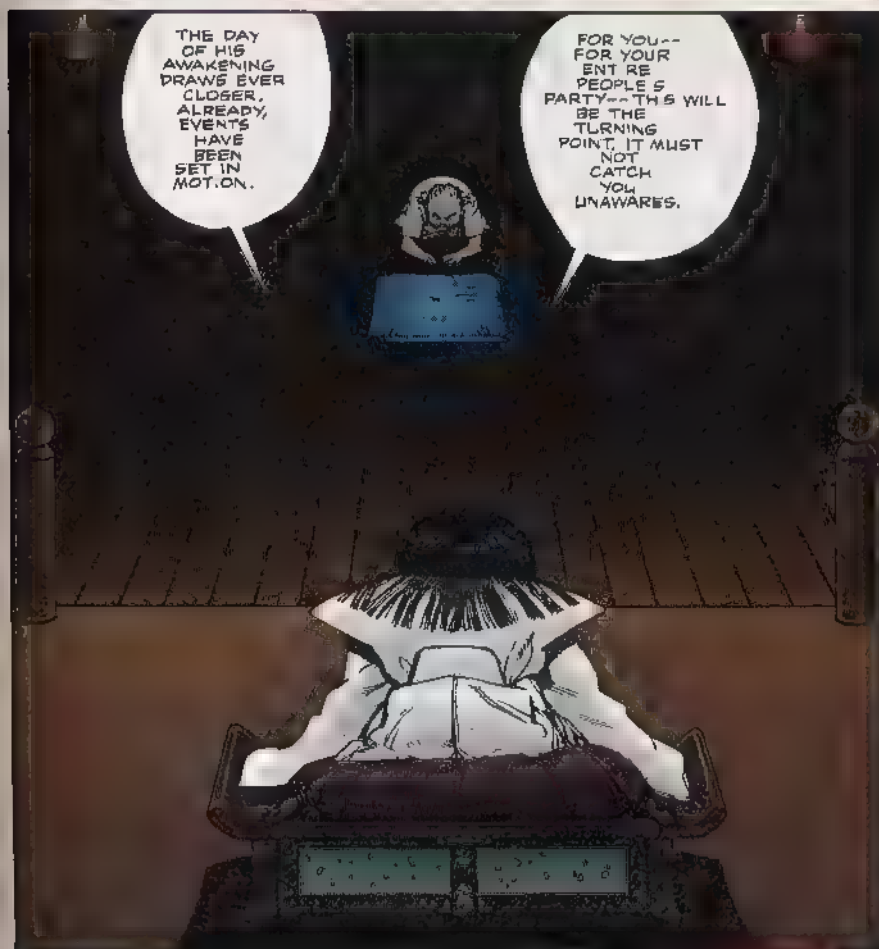


IS
THE
NAME
OF
THIS
DISASTER
...AKIRA?



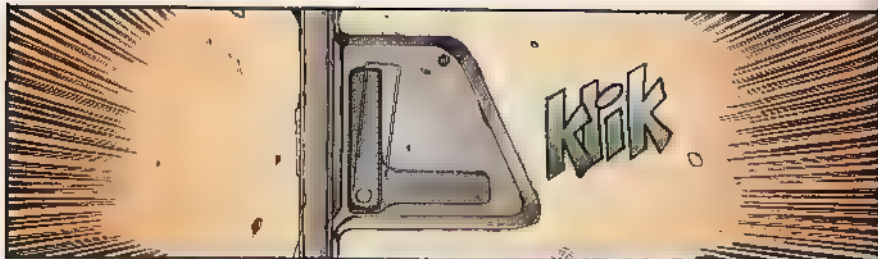
IT IS A
DESTINY
WHICH
CANNOT
BE
AVERTED

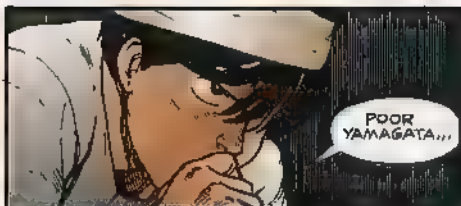
AKIRA
IS
A PAWN,
AS
ARE
WE
ALL.

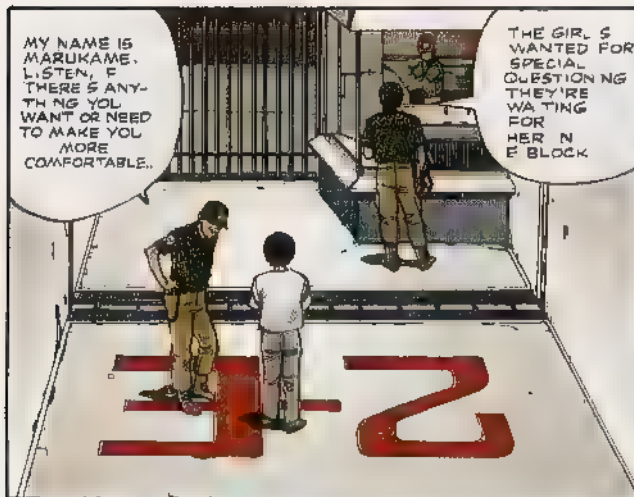


THE DAY
OF HIS
AWAKENING
DRAWS EVER
CLOSER.
ALREADY,
EVENTS
HAVE
BEEN
SET IN
MOTION.

FOR YOU--
FOR YOUR
ENTIRE
PEOPLE'S
PARTY-- THIS WILL
BE THE
TURNING
POINT. IT MUST
NOT
CATCH
YOU
UNAWARES.







MY NAME IS MARUKAME. LISTEN, IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU WANT OR NEED TO MAKE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE..

THE GIRL'S WANTED FOR SPECIAL QUESTIONING. THEY'RE WAITING FOR HER IN E BLOCK.



...YOU JUST SEND WORD TO ME IN UNIT #3

RRRRRR



WHAT A LUCKY BREAK FOR YOU, HAVING A NICE GUY LIKE ME GUARDING YOU

PAY NO ATTENTION TO HIM



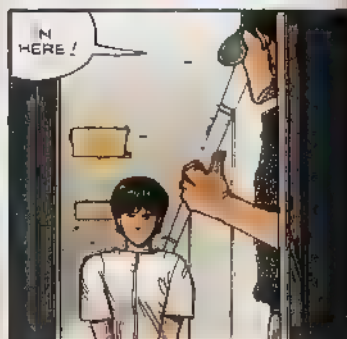
NO PRIVILEGES, AND NO EXCEPTIONS!

LIGHTEN UP, SHE'S JUST A GIRL.

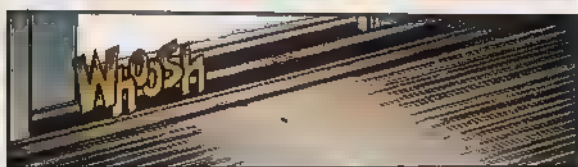


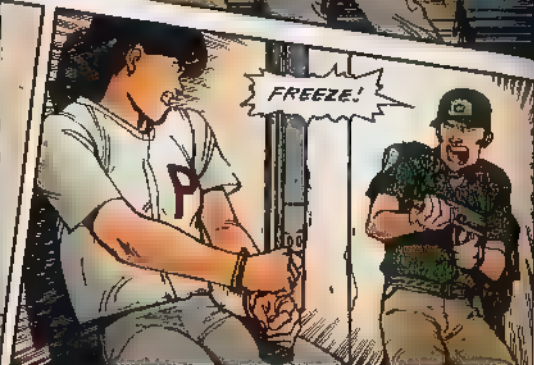
SHUT UP!

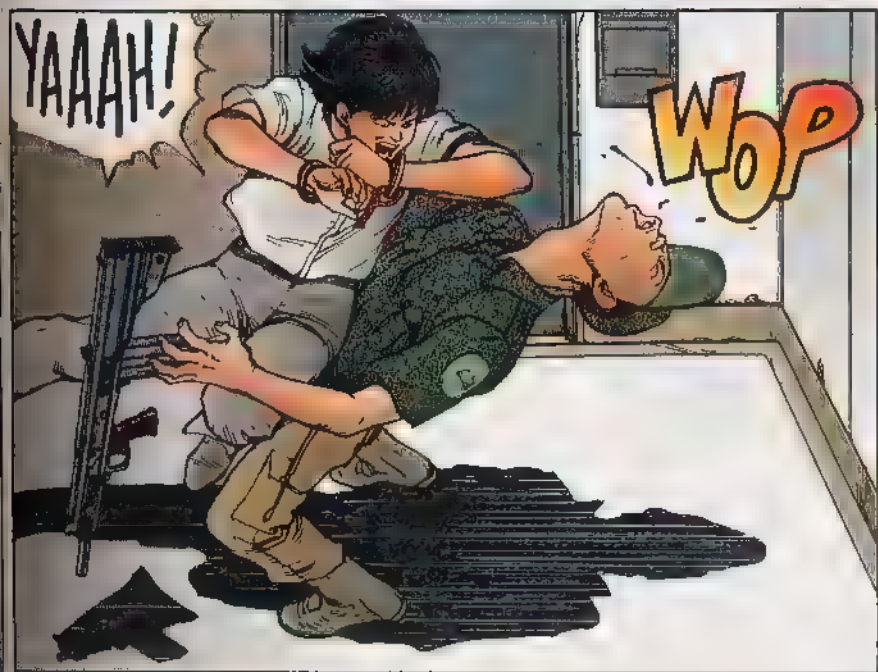
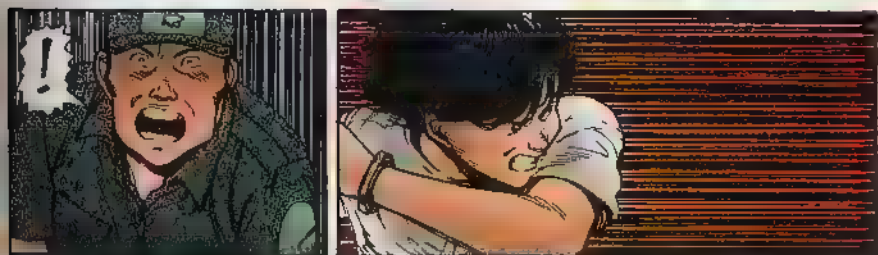
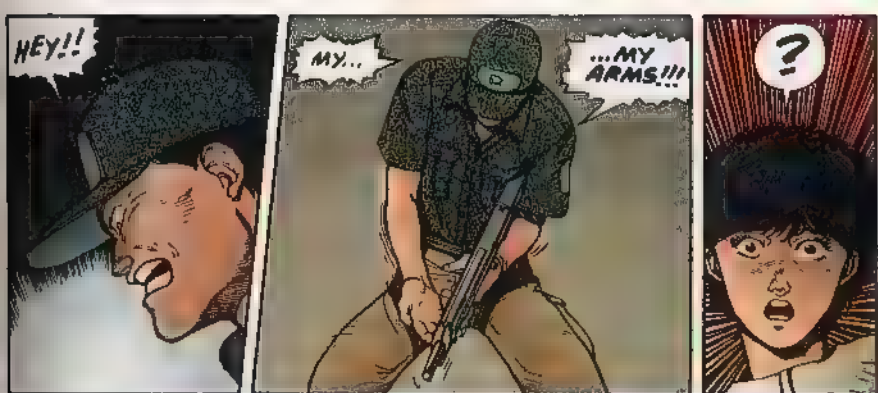
Ping

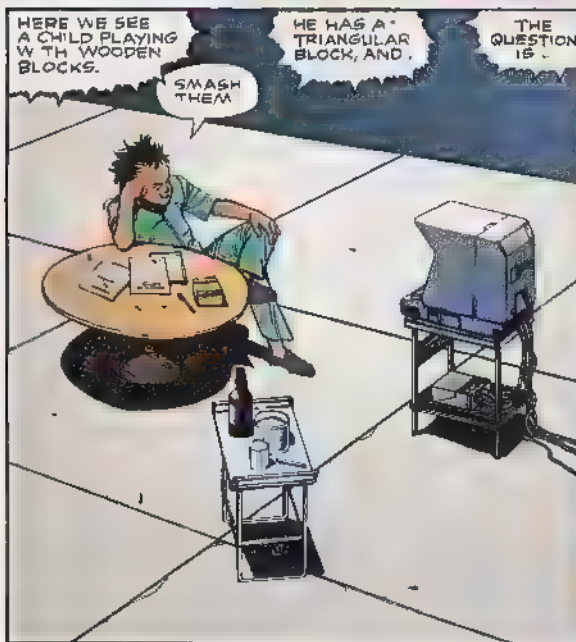
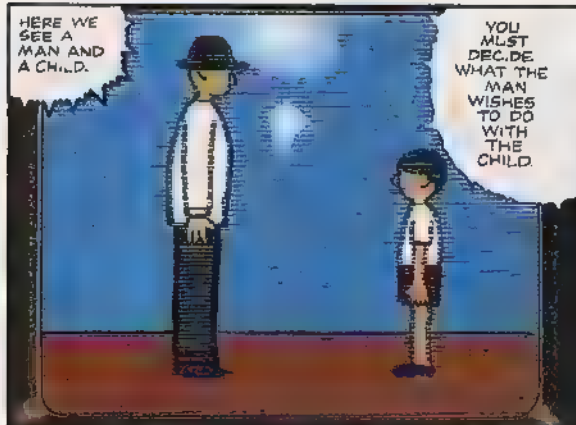


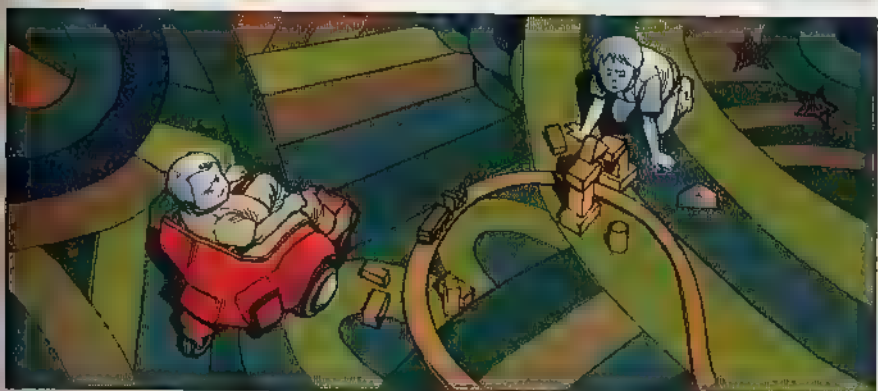
IN HERE!

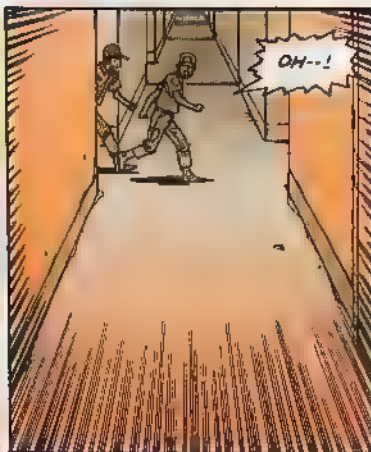


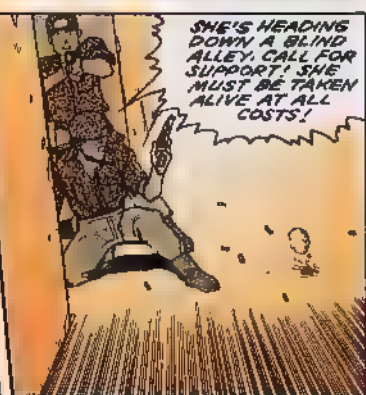
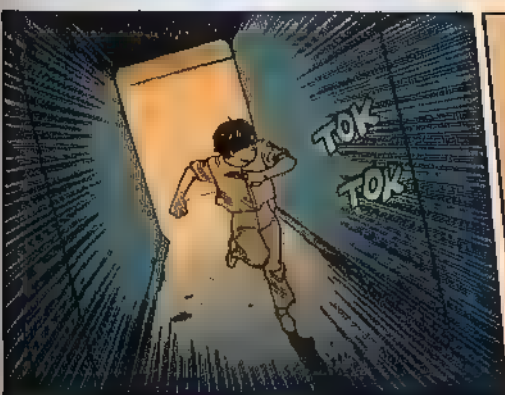
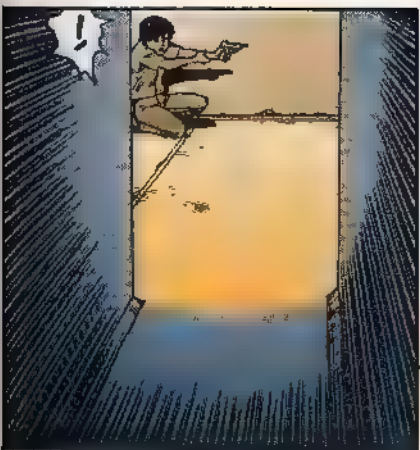


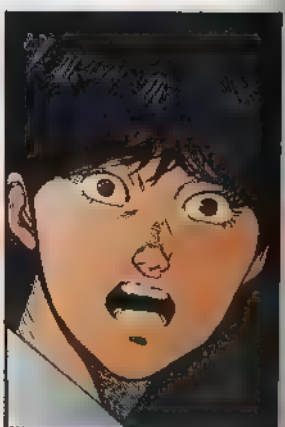
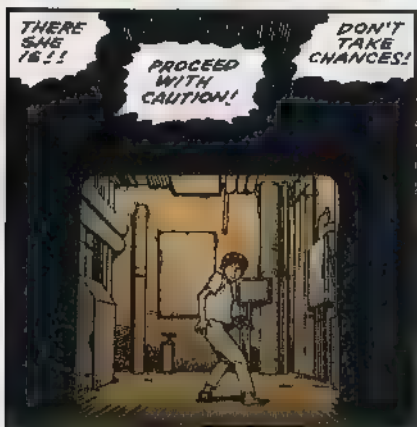










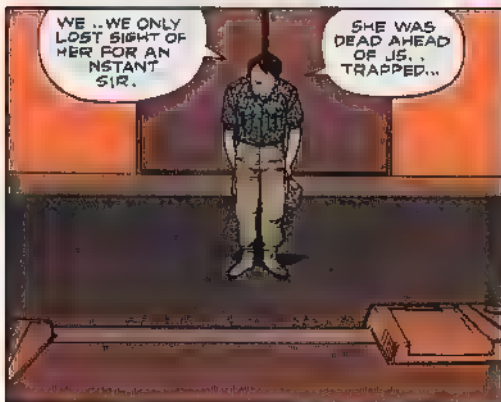




WHAT DO
YOU MEAN SHE
DISAPPEARED?!



WE ..WE ONLY
LOST SIGHT OF
HER FOR AN
INSTANT
SIR.

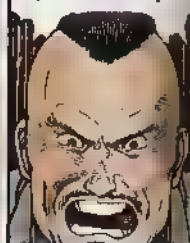


SHE WAS
DEAD AHEAD
OF US...
TRAPPED...

BAM



BLITHERING
NINCOMPOPS!



WE'RE VERY
SORRY, SIR!!



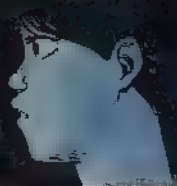
NOT EVEN A
COCKROACH CAN
MOVE HERE
UNDETECTED.
THE GIRL MUST
BE SOMEWHERE.



NOW GO
AND FIND
HER!!!



YESSIR!!



WHERE
AM I...?





THEY'RE STILL CHECKING, SIR, BUT SO FAR THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF HER.



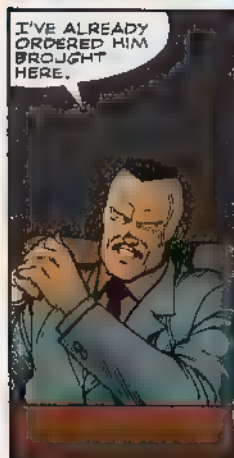
YOUR OPINION . ?



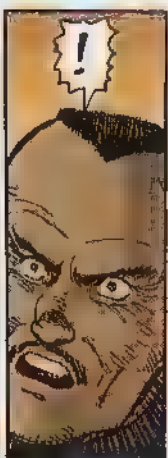
BUT, IF I MIGHT SUGGEST... DIDN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT A BOY WHO WAS BROUGHT IN WITH HER... ?



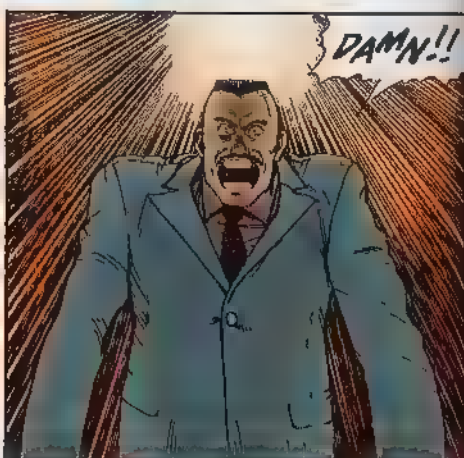
WITHOUT PROPER TESTS THERE'S NO POINT IN EVEN SPECULATING ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT SHE HAS THE POWER.



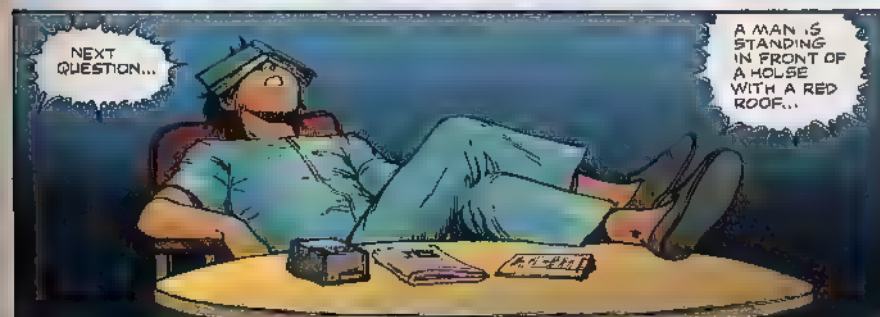
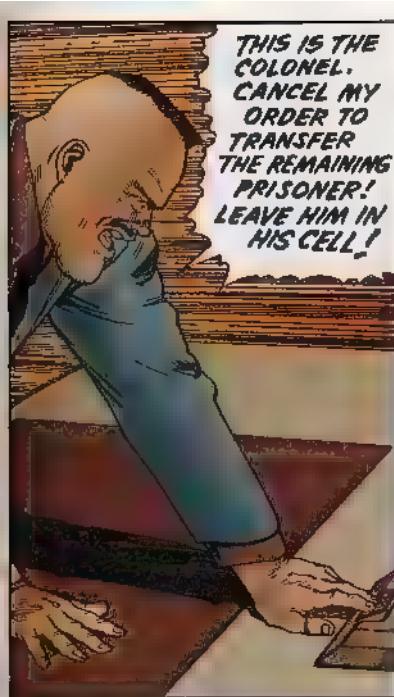
I'VE ALREADY ORDERED HIM BROUGHT HERE.

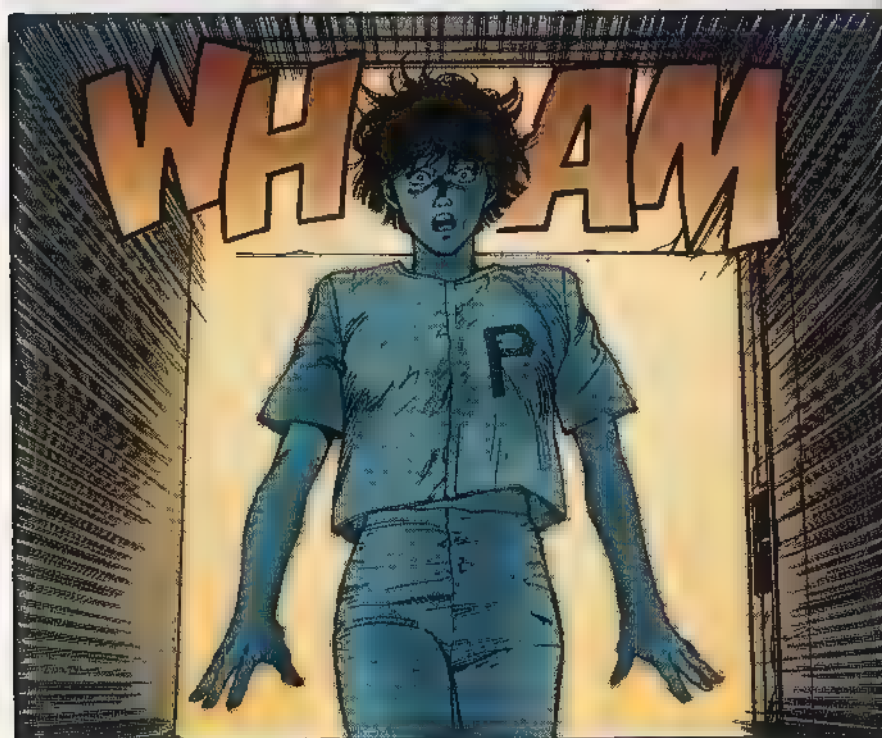
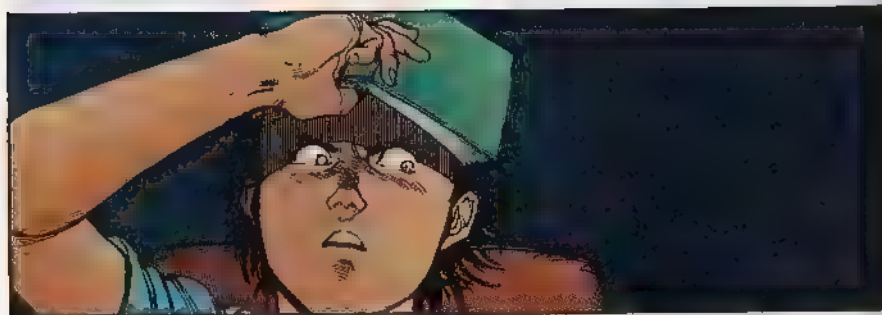
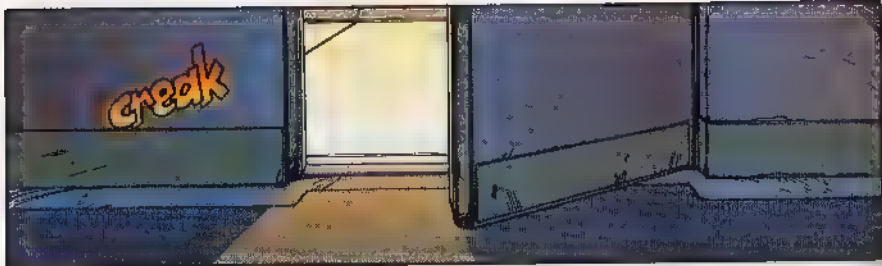


!

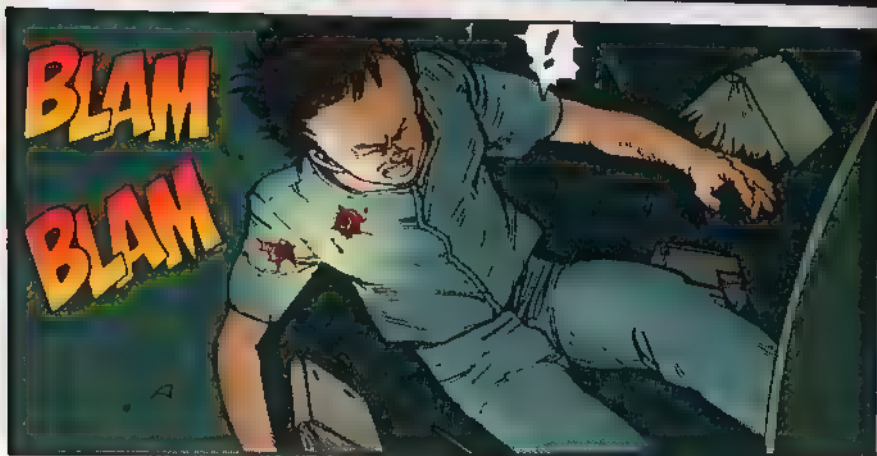
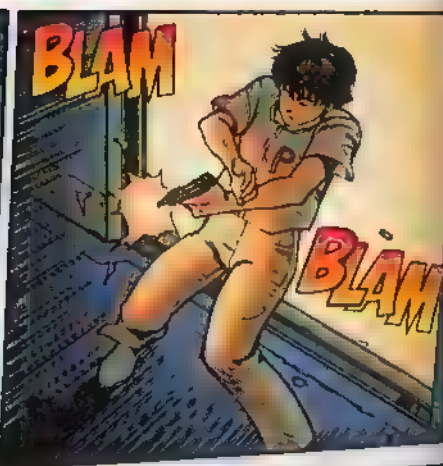


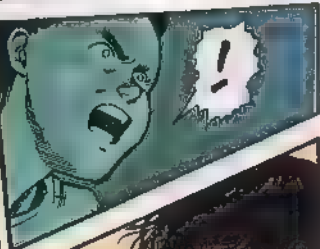
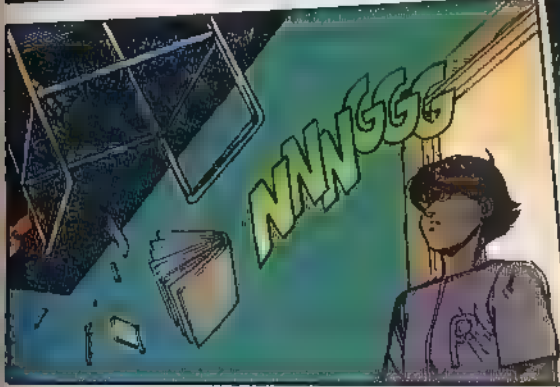
DAMN!!

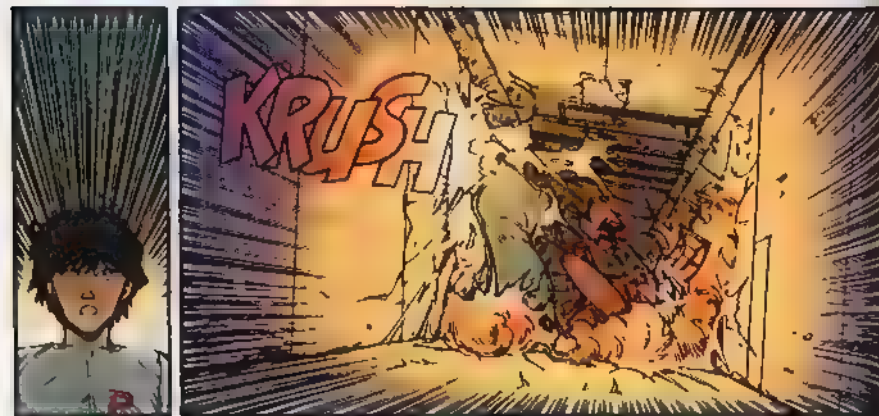
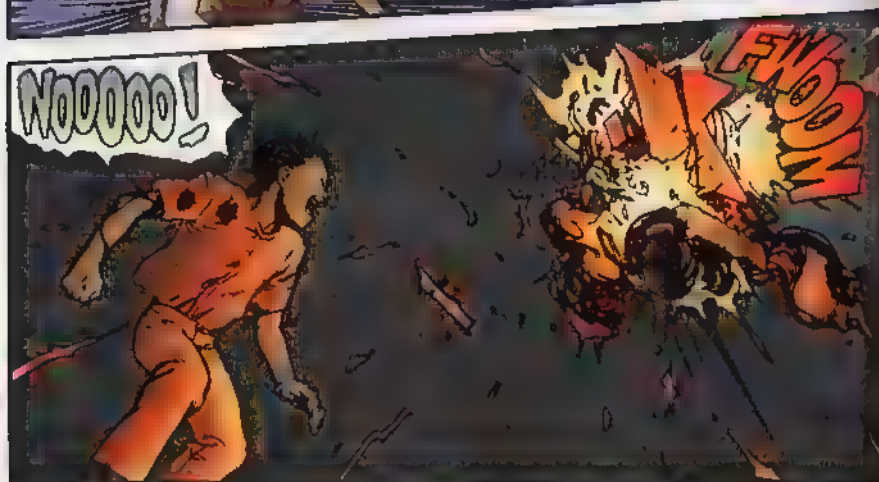
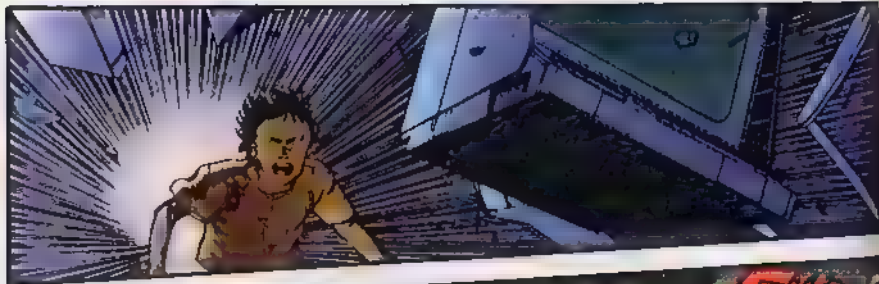


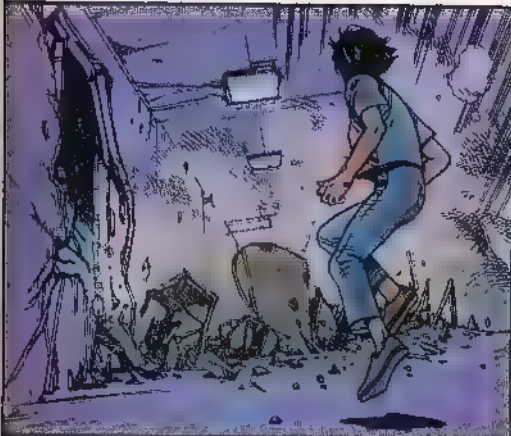


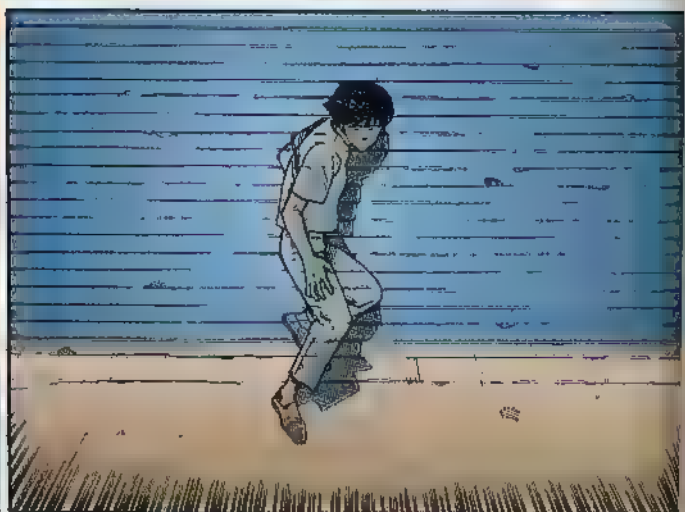
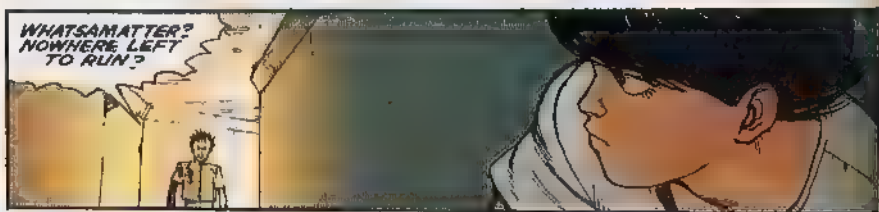
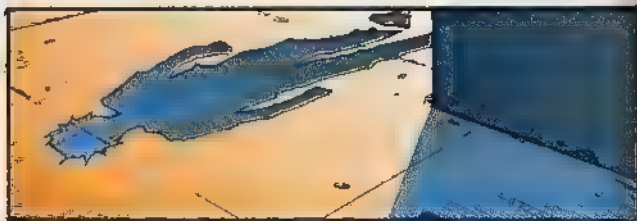
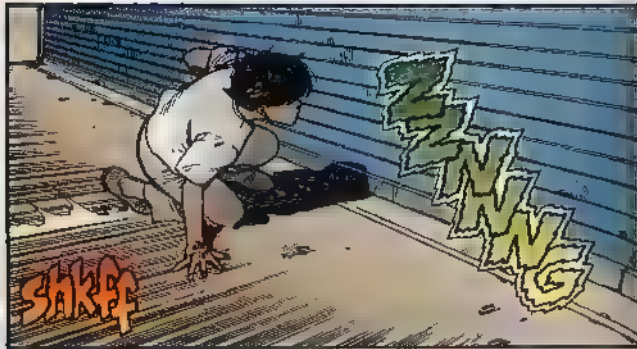


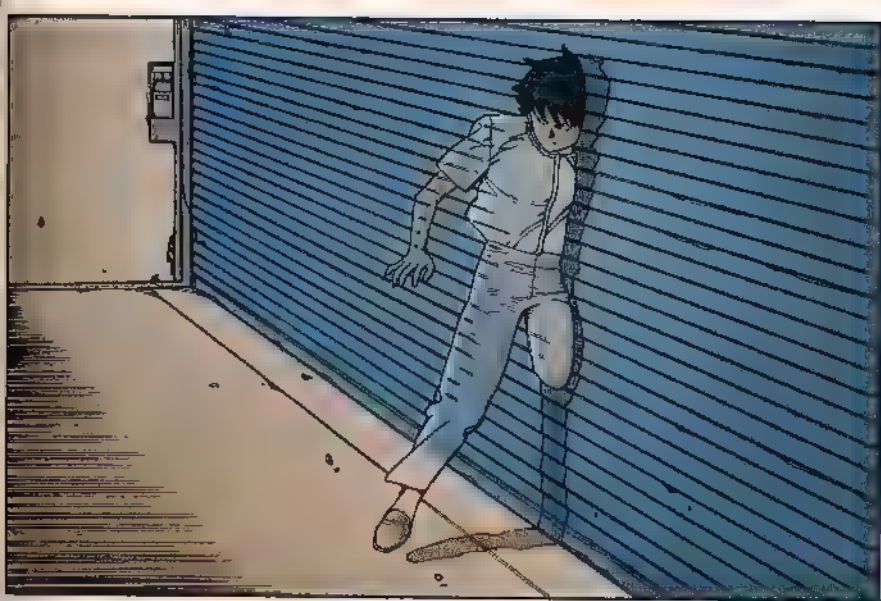


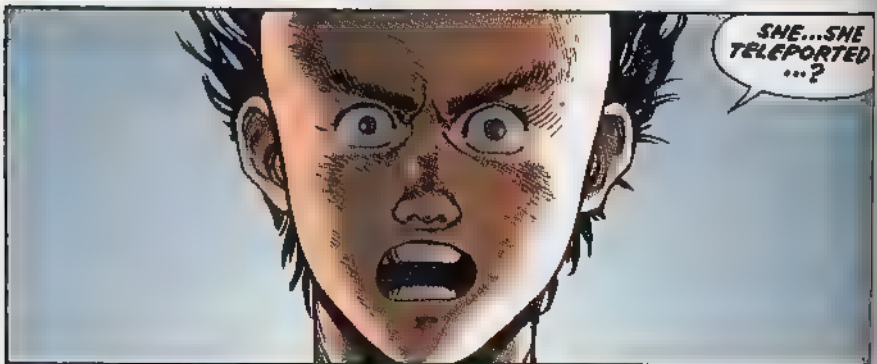
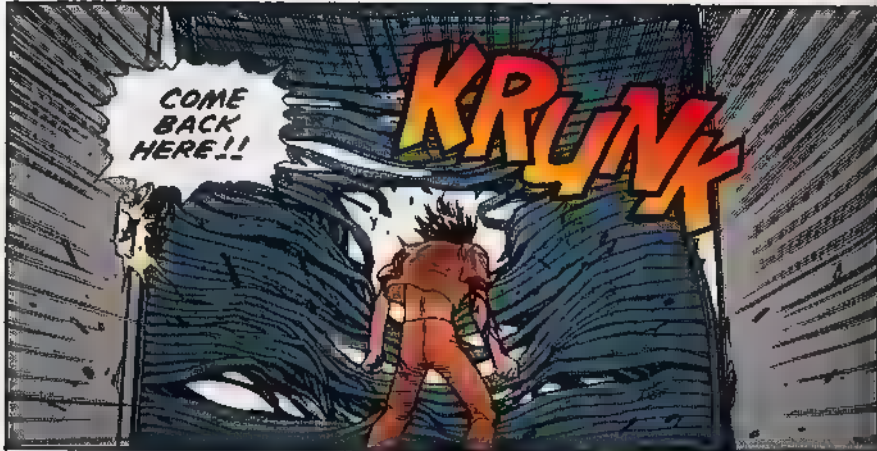












TROMP TROMP TROMP TROMP



MOVE IT!!

THEY'RE WEAR NG PROTECTIVE GEAR

SHUT UP!

YOU GUYS ALWAYS GET THIS MUCH TRAFFIC THROUGH HERE?



IS THERE ANYWHERE AROUND HERE A GUY COULD TAKE A LEAK?

I SAID SHUT UP!!



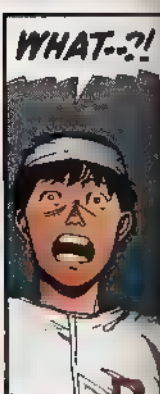
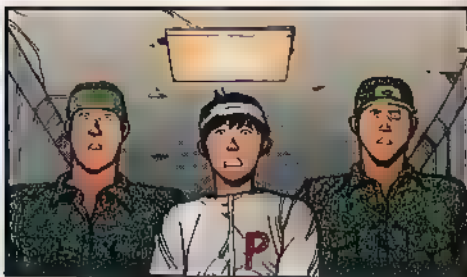
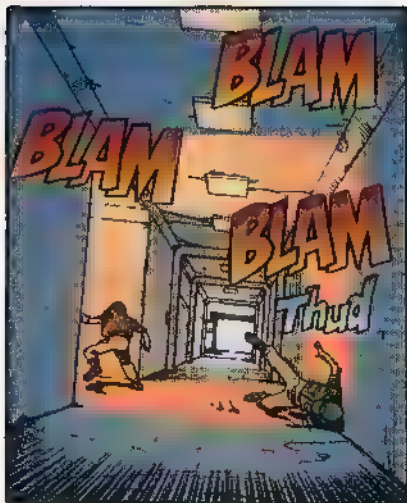
NO KIDD NG. I DON T THINK I CAN HOLD T MUCH LONGER!

CONTROL YOURSELF OR YOU CLEAN IT UP!



HUH?!

!



KAY!!

RADIO FOR
BACKUP!

THESE GUNS
ARE
USELESS!!

WE HAVEN'T
HIT HER
ONCE!!

BLAM

KAY!!
IT'S
MEEE!

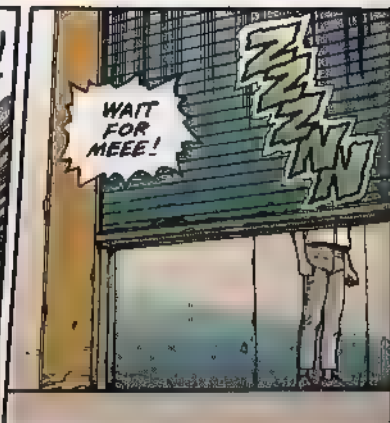
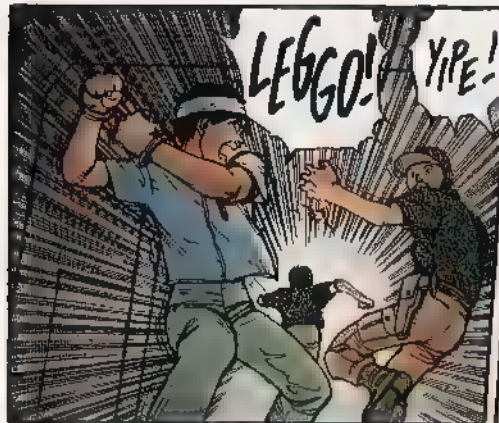
COME
ON!!

LOWER THE
FIRE DOORS!
WE'LL BOX
HER IN!

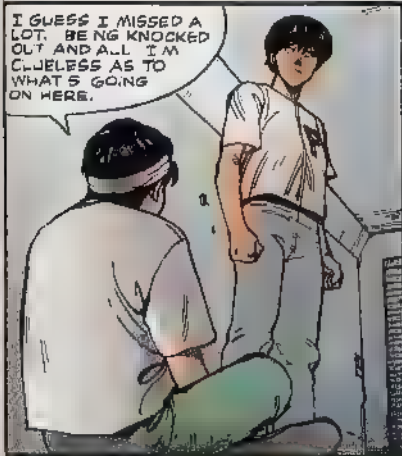
CLEAR THE
AREA! THEY'RE
COMING DOWN
NOW!

ZZNNNN

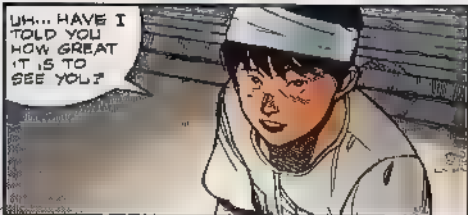
KAY!!



I GUESS I MISSED A LOT. BEING KNOCKED OUT AND ALL I'M CLUELESS AS TO WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.



UH... HAVE I TOLD YOU HOW GREAT IT IS TO SEE YOU?

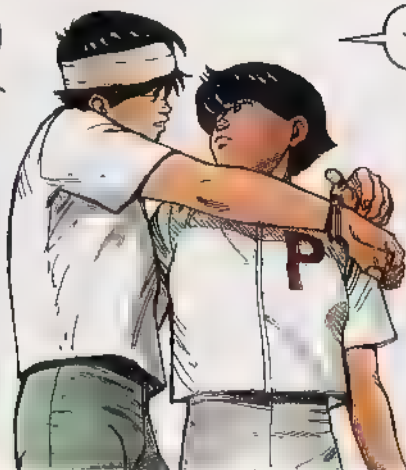


NO KIDDING, BABY. I WAS REALLY WORRIED ABOUT YOU ...

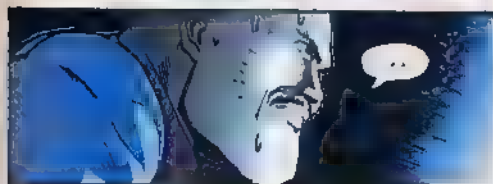


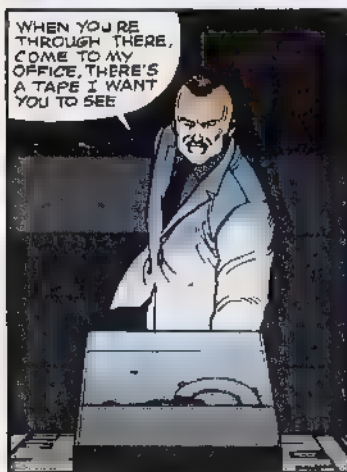
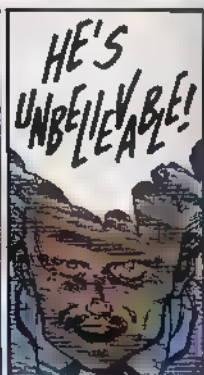
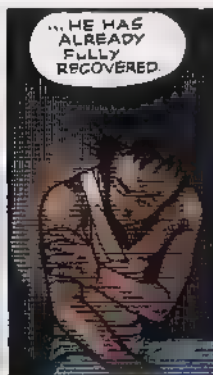
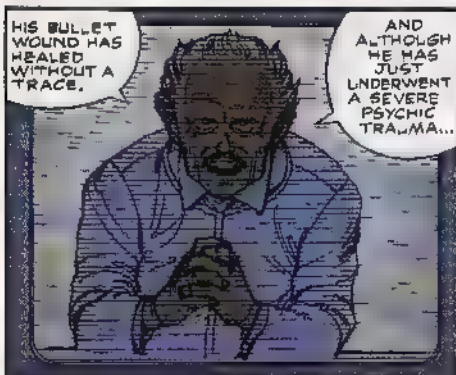
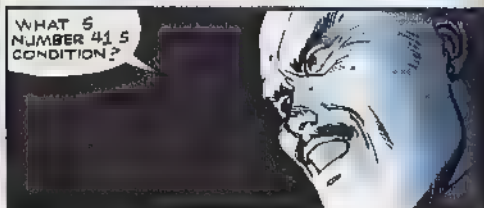
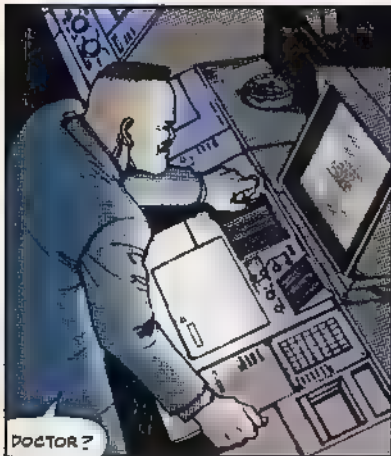
BUT NOW WE'RE TOGETHER AGAIN.

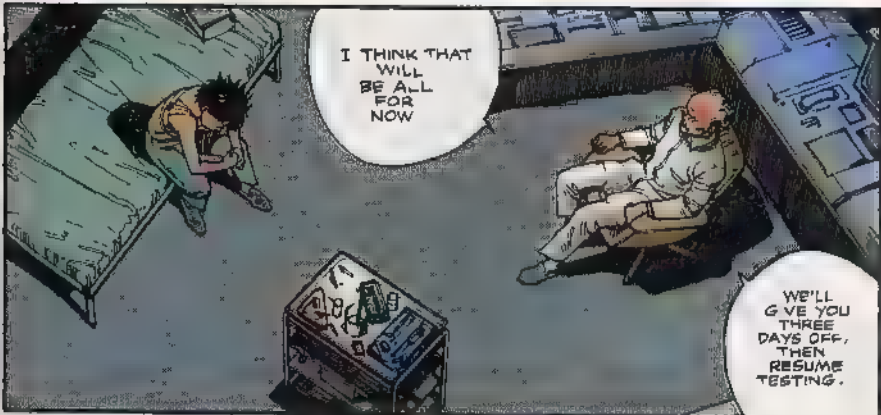
JUST YOU .. AND ME...





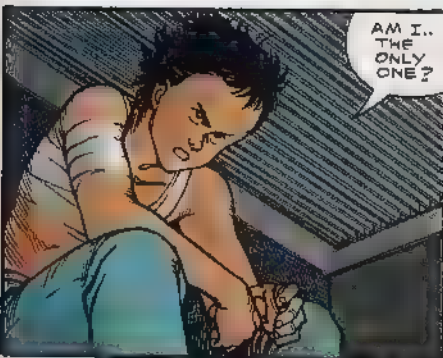




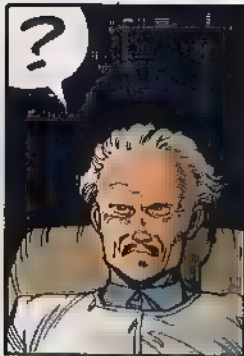


I THINK THAT
WILL
BE ALL
FOR
NOW

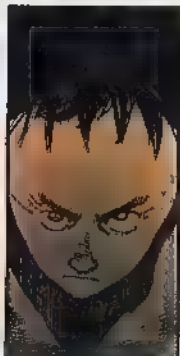
WE'LL
GIVE YOU
THREE
DAYS OFF,
THEN
RESUME
TESTING.



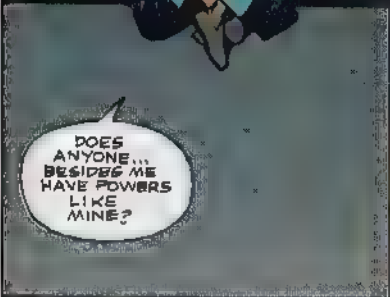
AM I..
THE
ONLY ONE?



?



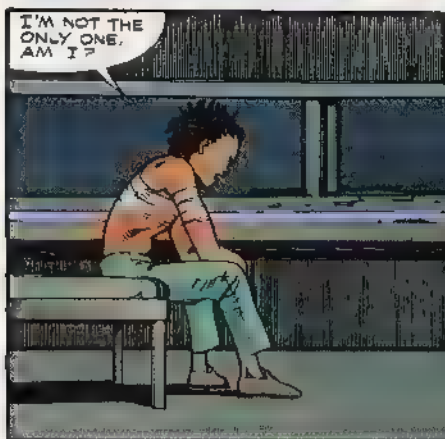
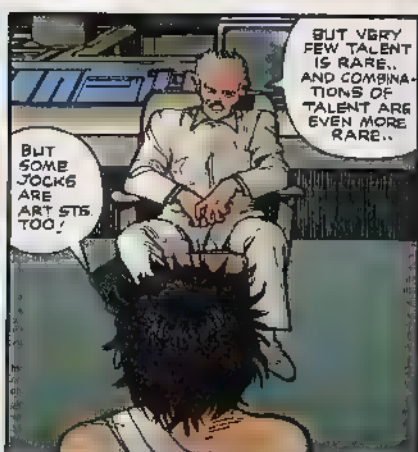
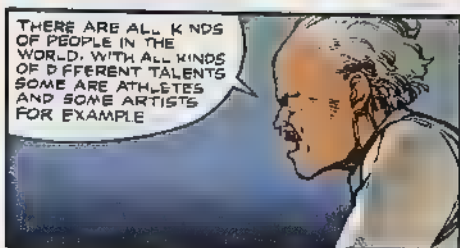
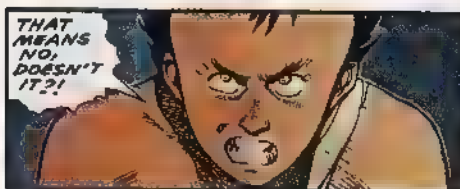
WHY DO YOU
ASK...?

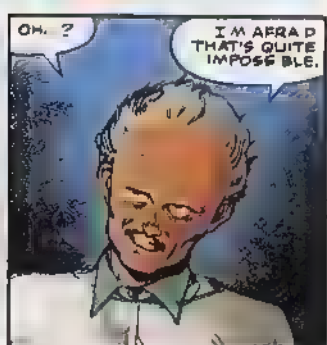
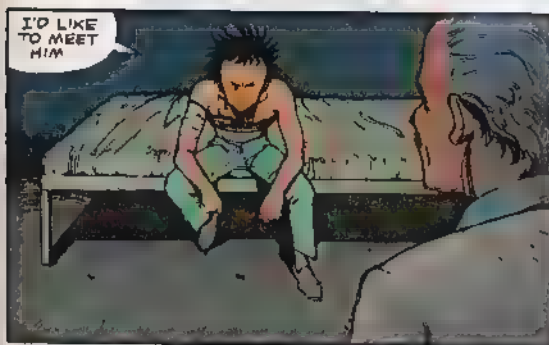


DOES
ANYONE...
BESIDE ME
HAVE POWERS
LIKE
MINE?



THAT GIRL
--SHE
DISAPPEARED!
FROM RIGHT
IN FRONT
OF ME!





NEXT ISSUE: **WEAPON OF VENGEANCE**



OTOMO GALLERY

Last issue we presented for the first time in these pages examples of the special artwork created by Katsuhiro Otomo as title pages for the serialized segments of *Akira* which appear in *Young Magazine*, the popular comics anthology from Kodansha, Ltd.

Have there been any other stations from
the 'teen' series, and how did the saga of *AKIRA*
first began publication in Tokyo.





Along with providing a good look at how Mr. Otomo's finely shaded and detailed art appears in black and white prior to the computerized colorization done for our edition by Steve Oliff (with *Akira* creator Otomo's approval and consultation), the material offers a tantalizing glimpse of scenes and characters (such as Chieko, pictured above), that will be coming your way in the months ahead.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

writer/illustrator

YASUMITSU SUETAKE

chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

MAKOTO SHIOSAKI

SATOSHI TAKABATAKE

assistants to Mr. Otomo

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designer, AKIRA calligraph

AKIRA SAITO

designer, Kodansha edition

Kodansha Ltd.

YOKO UMEZAWA

with **LINDA M. YORK**

translation

KOICHI YURI

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YUKA ANDO

editorial coordinators

Epic Comics

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colorist

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letterer

HARRY CANDELARIO

ED MAGALONG

production

ANDREW WYATT

editorial assistant, Epic edition

ARCHIE GOODWIN

editor, Epic edition

Within one of 21st Century Neo-Tokyo's great city towers is a secret government project. Here, a volatile group of individuals is gathered. Most volatile of all is Tetsuo, haunted delinquent with murderous psychic power. The project's head, the Colonel, hopes Tetsuo can be used to counter an even greater threat...the as yet slumbering paranormal giant AKIRA. But three mutant children in the project sense impending doom in Tetsuo's presence. And two captives there—the anti-government agent, Kay, and Tetsuo's former friend, Kaneda—would do anything to see Tetsuo never unleashes his power again. All of these individuals are prisoners in a deadly chain of events, players in a mounting game of earth-shattering consequence.

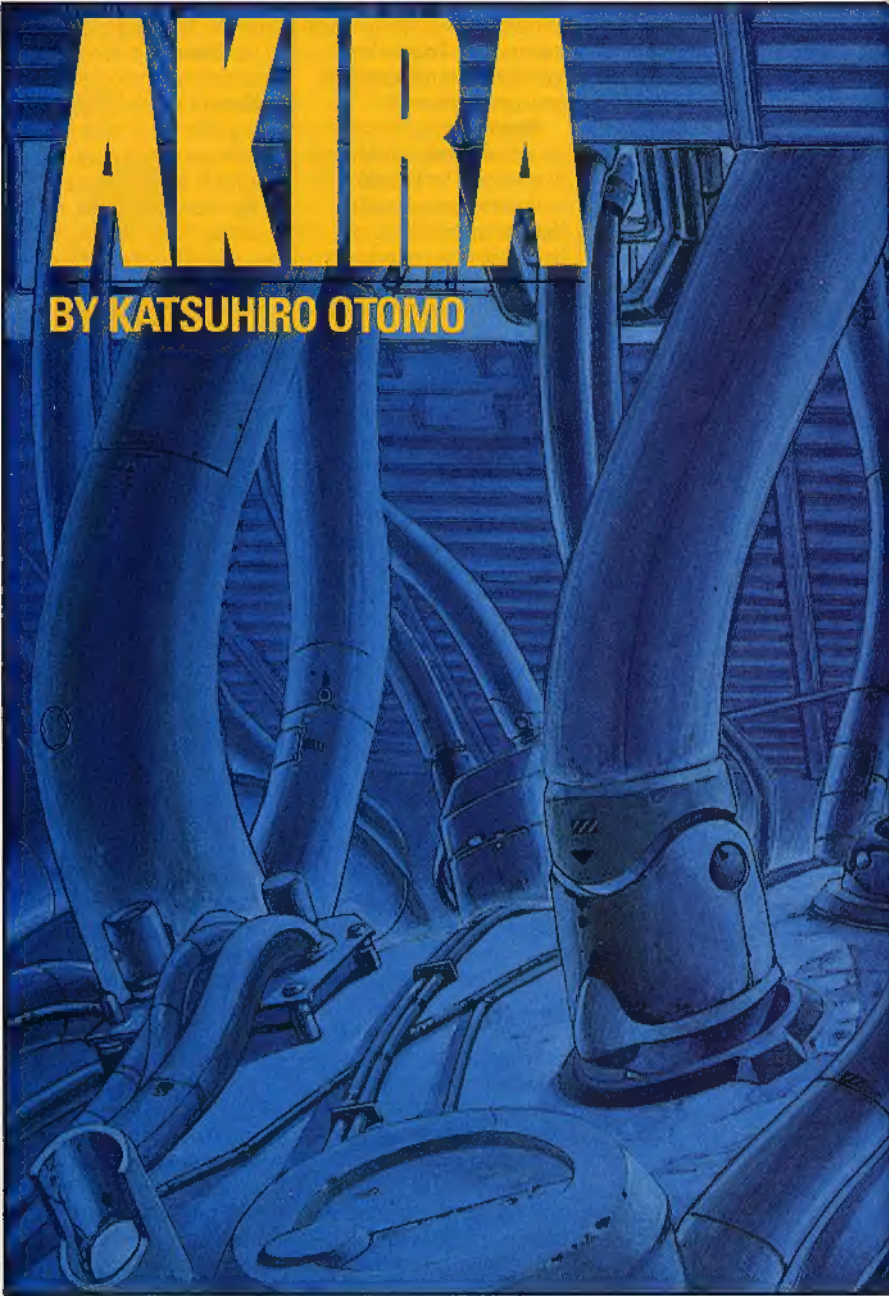
KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

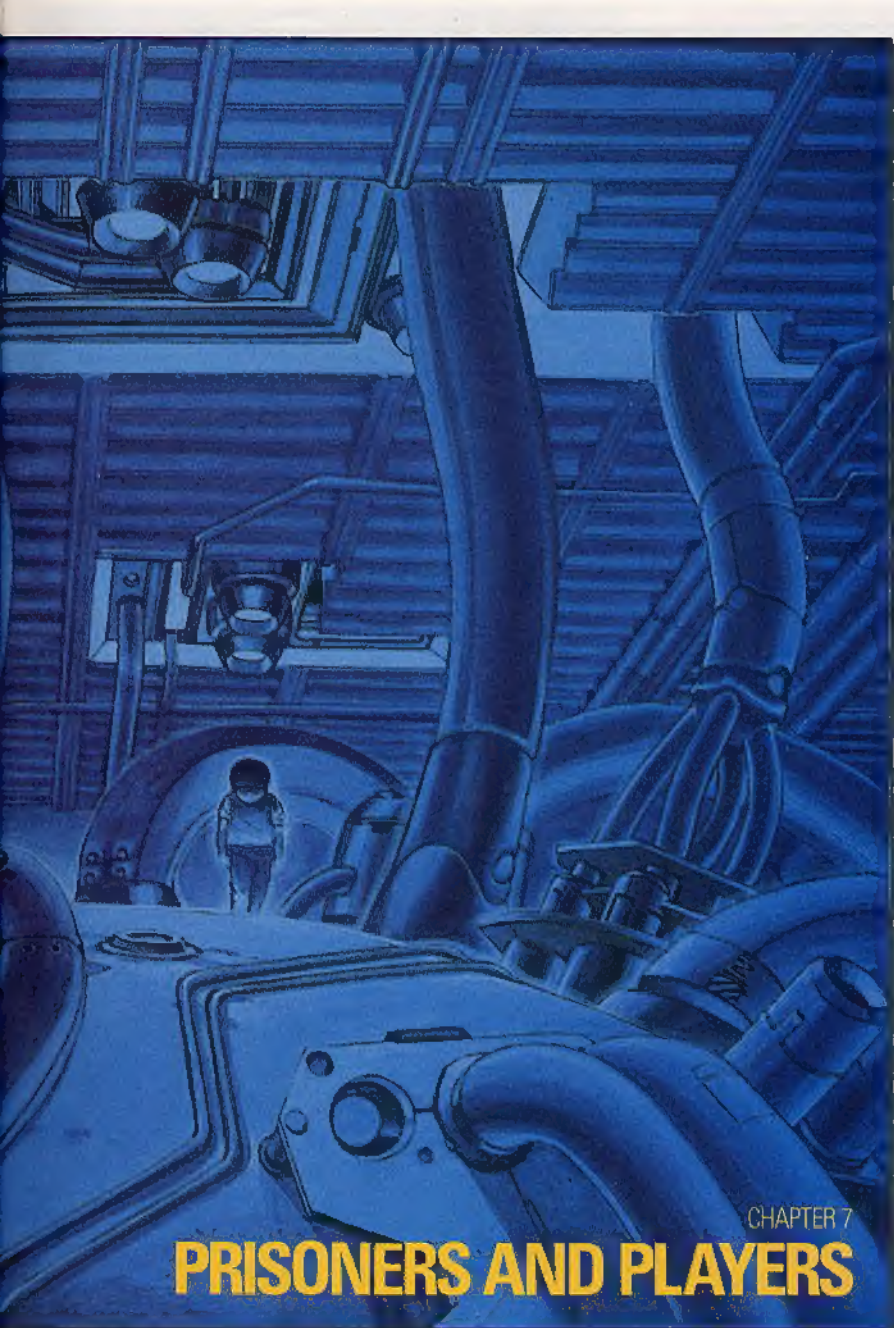
AKIRA



AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO





CHAPTER 7

PRISONERS AND PLAYERS